MOTORING / B2-1

Satisfy your fantasy car collection without sweating a drop of gas

NEWS / A7

Senate session jolted by Enrile outburst vs Pimentel over antiterror bill

WORLD / A22

South Korea's foreign minister likely to be UN secretary general

BUSINESS / B1

Peso climbs to 4-year high of P49.88 to $1

Royal bible on etiquette comes out of Victorian era

LONDON—FOR HUNDREDS of years, Debrett's has guided Britain's aristocracy through the niceties of meeting royalty, going to the races or eating soup the correct way.

Now, the publishers of the bible of blue-blooded behavior

ROYAL/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, October 4, 2006 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 298 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Activist Aglipayan bishop stabbed dead

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon
and Michael Lim Ubac
in Manila

CAPAS, TARLAC—AN AGLIPAYAN bishop who spoke out against the extrajudicial killings under the Arroyo ad-

ACTIVIST/ A6

RAMENTO

MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ: No talk.

'Ombudsman ignored Supreme Court'

ARTEMIO PANGANIBAN: No comment.

Also nixed own field report recommending raps vs Abalos et al.

By Norman Bordadora, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza

FORMER SENATE PRESIDENT JOVITO SALONGA yesterday called the Office of the Ombudsman's resolution absolving Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and other officials involved in the P1.3-billion poll automation deal "an unthinkable reversal" of the Supreme Court decision that voided the Comelec's contract with Mega Pacific.

Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee that investigated the Mega Pacific deal, said the Ombudsman in effect ignored the Supreme Court and the Senate, which had found the deal anomalous.

Salonga, a complainant in the case filed with the Office of the Ombudsman against Comelec officials and executives of Mega Pacific, described the resolution announced on Monday as a "brazen somersault."

"There was grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack of jurisdiction. (Overall

OMBUDSMAN/ A10

SC: No comment; ruling to void contract stands

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SUPREME COURT REFUSED TO COMment on the Office of the Ombudsman's decision to exonerate officials of the Commission on Elections and Mega Pacific involved in the voided P1.3-billion poll automation contract.

SC: NO COMMENT/ A10

Contrary report cites Abalos links to Mega owners

By Norman Bordadora

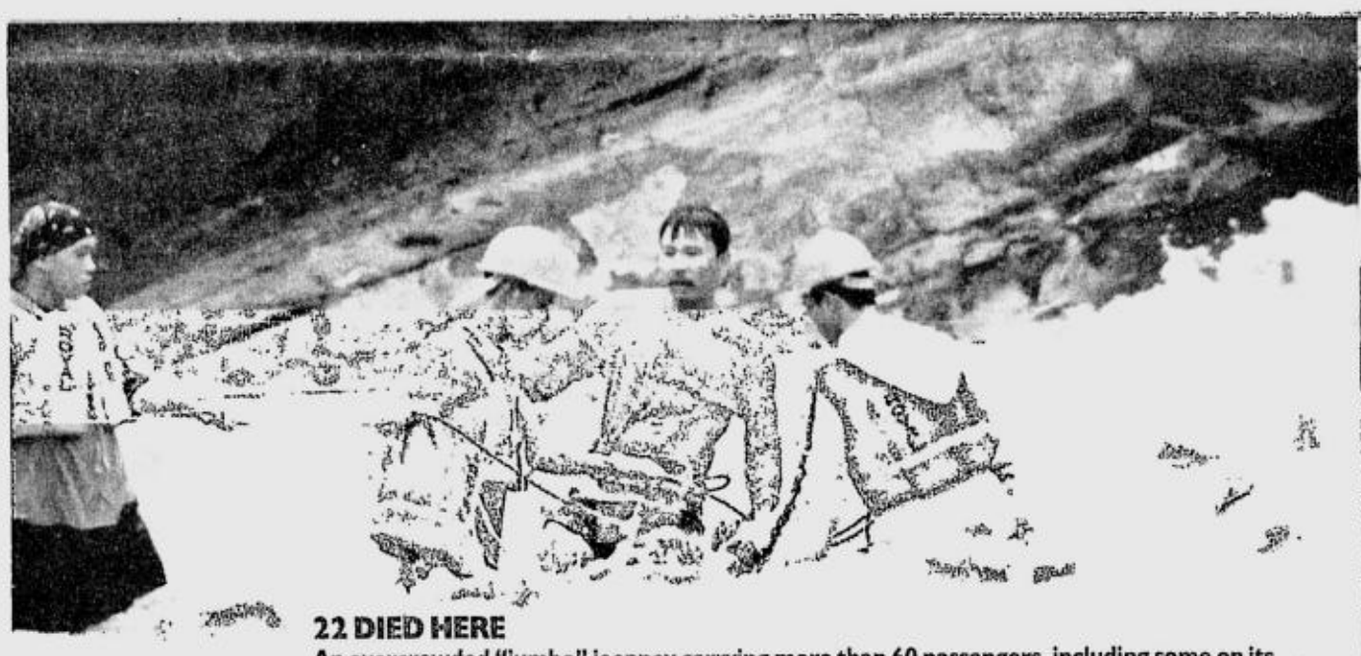
THE FIELD INVESTIGATION OFFICE (FIO) of the Ombudsman had recommended that all respondents in the graft complaint involving the Commission on Elections' P1.3-billion poll automation deal be charged "criminally, administratively and civilly" for the anomalous contract.

In a 20-page comment submitted on Sept. 4, lawyer Ma. Olivia Elena Roxas recommended that graft charges be filed against all the respondents, including Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, the incumbent commissioners at the time the deal was consummated, the members of the Comelec's bids and awards committee and executives of the Mega Pacific Consortium (MPC).

"The presence of conspiracy among the Comelec officials was likewise apparent in that not one single official or officer questioned the illegal and irregular actions attendant to the bidding process," Roxas said in her comment.

"They obviously turned a blind eye on the questionable transaction probably because of Chairman Abalos' close links with (Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc.'s) key

CONTRARY/ A10



22 DIED HERE
An overcrowded "jumbo" jeepney carrying more than 60 passengers, including some on its roof, was swept away on Tuesday while crossing a bridge without railings in Igbaras town, Iloilo. Twenty-two were killed. The bodies of the victims were brought to the town hall (right). Searching for survivors (above), rescuers brave raging waters to find at least 21 passengers still missing at press time. *(Story on Page A2.)* AFP/REUTERS

Residents still in the dark dispute Meralco claim

By Abigail L. Ho

MERALCO YESTERDAY CLAIMED IT had restored electricity to most of Metro Manila, except parts of Muntinlupa and Quezon City, but residents in some areas supposedly already lighted up grumbled they were still sweating out their days and nights.

The Meralco claim flew in the face of complaints from residents still living in the dark in parts of Makati, Pasay and Taguig—six days after Typhoon "Milenyo" pounded Luzon and knocked out distribution circuits and power lines.

One Makati employee, IT specialist Jerry Magcalas, who lives near Fort Bonifacio Global City, for example, has been suffering from sleepless nights since Thursday when the Luzon grid suffered a systemwide blackout.

He said his barangay and another one near the Ayalas' Market! Market! was still in darkness.

But Meralco said the only Metro Manila areas without electricity were Alabang Hills, Hillsborough Village, Pacific Malayan Village in Muntinlupa; portions of Barangay Laging Handa, Paltok and San Francisco del Monte in Quezon City, and parts of West Triangle, South Triangle and Edsa, also in Quezon City.

In the badly stricken Bicol region, home to some 10.6 million people, 50 percent of Albay and Sorsogon was still

RESIDENTS/ A5

Mother of all billboards is GMA's test case

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MOTHER OF ALL BILLBOARDS standing on church property along the country's busiest highway will be the "test case" of President Macapagal-Arroyo's resolve to crack down on advertising structures that have become not only eyesores but hazards during typhoons.

"We will go by with what is in the implementing rules and regulations of the President in her administrative order. There will be no sacred cows," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday in a briefing in Malacañang.

"(The giant Guadalupe seminary billboard) will surely be a test case. That will be a signal to them (other billboard owners)," said Ermita, who was aware that the monster structure within the compound of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Minor Seminary and San Carlos Seminary in Guadalupe, Makati, provided substantial revenues to its owner, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila.

"I say watch out as far as the billboard owners are concerned and even local government executives with the national government now are more focused and

MOTHER/ A5

'Arnis' boosts Fil-Ams' sense of pride

By Volt Contreras

CROSSING LAND BRIDGES THAT ONCE LINKED the Philippine archipelago to the Asian mainland, ancient fighters introduced to Filipinos a form of martial arts believed to have come from India and now called kali, eskrima and arnis de mano.

Yes, those rattan canes—and the graceful moves that make them lethal—are that old, according to generally held notions as to the origins of the Pinoy warrior art.

With a deep sense of history, a Filipino-American based in California since the late '60s considers his mastery of kali (considered the pre-Spanish name for arnis or eskrima) as a bridge to the country of his birth—and hopes that more Fil-Ams would join him in paying ambidextrous homage to their shared cultural roots.

Arnold Noche has been taking time from his busi-

ARNIS/ A4

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"A STICK IN HAND is very Filipino," says Arnold Noche.

CHR chair refuses to answer Melo panel's questions

By Fe Zamora

SNUBBED BY LEFTIST GROUPS AND the families of purported victims of extrajudicial killings, the Melo Commission yesterday suffered yet another putdown, this time from the Commission on Human Rights.

CHR Chair Purificacion Quisumbing scored the commission chaired by retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Jose Melo for sending her an official summons, saying an invitation would have sufficed.

"Why did you send us a subpoena? You should have sent us an invitation; the subpoena was not necessary because

CHR CHAIR/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2006

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Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon will have rains and gusty winds and the coastal waters along these areas will be moderate to rough. The rest of the country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Luzon and Visayas which may trigger flashfloods and landslides.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/03/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Stormy	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Catapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

'Milenyo' death toll mounting

By Marlon Ramos
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE DEATH TOLL FROM TYphoon "Milenyo" remained at 190 yesterday, but the Office of Civil Defense expects the number to rise as rescue workers discover more victims in remote areas where the storm sparked flash floods and landslides.

The Calabarzon industrial belt south of Manila bore the brunt of the storm, with at least 144 dead in five provinces, according to the OCD and local governments.

The figure included three people who drowned when an irrigation dam collapsed in Gen. Trias, Cavite last week and whose bodies were fished out of the rivers of Noveleta and Kawit towns early yesterday, said Armando Duque, chair of the OCD-Calabarzon.

Elsewhere in the country, Bicol reported 28 dead, Metro Manila, 8, Central Luzon, 2, Mimaropa, 1, Eastern Visayas, 5, Western Visayas, 1 and the Cordillera region, 1.

The most number of the Calabarzon deaths were recorded in Laguna with 56. It was followed by Quezon (47), Cavite (31), Batangas (6) and Rizal (4).

A year to recover

Duque said it would take more than a year before Calabarzon, the country's most progressive region outside Metro Manila, can recover from the damage.

"We have started some rehabilitation. It's a good thing that the national government has given its full support to our efforts to rebuild the damaged structures here," he said.

The typhoon, the strongest to hit the metropolitan Manila area in a decade, displaced 1.33 million people and blacked out Luzon island, leaving some 43 million people in the dark.

The storm wrecked 146,000 houses and tens of thousands of hectares of farmland. Some 171,000 people displaced by floods and strong winds remain in evacuation centers.

In Geneva, the International Red Cross yesterday launched an appeal for $4.6 million (5.7 million Swiss francs) to help Milenyo victims in the Philippines.

"This storm caused more widespread destruction than anticipated," said Roger Bracke, head of the Manila delegation of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The Philippine National Red Cross has already provided urgent supplies, including rice and canned food, as well as dry clothes and hygiene items, to more than 6,375 families.

Volunteers and staff are also providing assistance to people at emergency shelters and helping to clean up roads.

In Laguna, most of the deaths were reported in Sta. Rosa where 19 people drowned when their houses located on riverbanks were destroyed by the rampaging waters.

Mayor Jose Catindig said water from Tagaytay and other upland areas of Cavite caused the rivers in Sta. Rosa to overflow. He said most of the victims were squatters near the rivers.

In Los Baños town, 16 people died, including 14 residents of a community in Mt. Makiling who were buried under boulders and thick mud.

Most of the 47 deaths in Quezon province were caused by flash floods, particularly in the Bondoc Peninsula area, said Henry Buzar, Quezon PDCC coordinator.

He said the hardest hit were the coastal towns of San Francisco and Mulanay situated at the mouth of the Tayabas Bay.

Some parts of Mulanay town were submerged in 6-feet-deep floods waters, said one Army soldier.

"The victims in San Francisco and Mulanay all died from drowning from the flash floods caused by the heavy rains and simultaneous high tide that triggered the overflowing of the rivers," Buzar said.

With reports from Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon and AFP

'Neneng' veers toward N. Luzon

TROPICAL STORM "NENENG" SLIGHTLY changed course yesterday moving west northwest toward northern and central Luzon, and is not expected to make landfall in the next three days, the country's weather bureau said.

The new storm was spotted 550 km east southeast of Casiguran, Aurora, moving at 7 kph west northwest with winds of 85 kph near the center, the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Administration reported.

"We suspect it has not intensified because there seems to be another area gathering strength from the same source. We don't expect it to change speed soon," Pagasa weather chief Nathaniel Cruz said.

Pagasa, however, has raised signal No. 1 over Catanduanes, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Quezon, Polillo Islands, Aurora, Quirino, Isabela and Cagayan.

"Neneng" is expected to be 220 kms east southeast of Casiguran, Aurora tomorrow morning. *Blanche S. Rivera*

RM GUIAO PUNZALAN

ALL LIES. Former Basilan Rep. Alvin G. Dans debunked graft charges against him and his wife Athena, the Customs assistant chief of the informal entry division, in a press conference at the Philippine Columbian.

Couple lashes out at DOF graft probers

By Leila B. Salaverria

A BUREAU OF CUSTOMS OFFICIAL and her husband yesterday refuted the allegations she had amassed ill-gotten wealth, saying they suspected adversaries in and out of the bureau of being behind the "false" claims.

Athena Dans, assistant chief of the informal entry division at the Manila International Container Port, said in a statement she may have made enemies in the course of doing her job.

The Department of Finance's Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS) had filed a complaint for violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act against Dans after alleging she had managed to buy nine cars and a resort and traveled abroad frequently despite her small salary.

"I had, on several occasions, refused to clear shipments that had not been examined, and in the process I stepped on the toes of some influential people," Dans said.

Dans' husband, Alvin, said at a press conference he suspected some people in the DOF and who did business with the BOC could be behind the campaign to destroy his wife's reputation.

He said he was not discounting the possibility the complaint was politically motivated.

He also called on the DOF to investigate the RIPS personnel who did the lifestyle check on his wife for the "haphazard" way it was done.

"What is this, show biz governance?" he said. "They're like bounty hunters, they shoot first and justify later."

Alvin said that contrary to the RIPS allegations, the couple had no penchant for travel. He said no member of his family had ever been to France and he had never been to Japan, as alleged.

He said it would have been easy for the RIPS agents to check immigration records.

Athena said her trip to Japan and Singapore in 1991 was a prize. Her trip to the United States in 2001 was related to her church activities, she said.

Alvin said the family's property in Quezon was not a P15-million resort but a retreat house whose market value was assessed at P7 million. He said the property was agricultural when they bought it.

He also said the family did not have nine cars but four.

He said he was a former congressman and governor of Basilan and an undersecretary of the interior; he had also served as a presidential consultant and postmaster general.

He said he was a consultant to Maynilad Water for three years beginning in 1998 where he earned P17.6 million and paid P1.2 million in taxes. At present, he is a lawyer and a businessman, he said.

Iloilo accident toll: 22 dead, 21 missing

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

IGBARAS, ILOILO—RESCUERS have counted 22 dead, among them two infants, and 21 still missing after an overloaded "jumbo" jeepney was swept by strong currents into the Tangyan River in Sitio Songsongon, 39 km south of Iloilo City on Monday.

Rescuers and villagers combed the rocks and crevices along the swollen river but brought up only 25 survivors out of the estimated 68 people on board the ill-fated jeepney that was ferrying them home from the funeral of a retired teacher.

Capt. Arthur Tuason Jr., Coast Guard commander in Western Visayas, said the chances of finding more survivors seemed slim. "Even good swimmers would not survive being carried by the current that long because of the boulders and rocks," Tuason told the INQUIRER.

It was the worst accident this town has ever seen. Reports said the jeepney, packed to its roof, stalled halfway across the Songsongon bridge, turned over then fell more than six feet down into rampaging waters. The 30-meter-long concrete bridge, constructed in 1989, has no side railings.

Of the 22 fatalities so far retrieved, two were children and nine were over 60 years old.

Relatives, friends and neighbors kept vigil at the rural health center in the town proper as they waited for news of loved ones. Sobs and cries of grief broke the silence each time rescuers arrive with remains of the victims.

"He told me he would go to the funeral (of Remo Eguico) but I did not expect him to return dead," said Cherry Estrellanes after she identified the remains of her 48-year old father Antonio Estrellanes at the town's health center around 1 p.m. yesterday.

The Songsongon overflow connects 12 hinterland barangays of Igbaras to the town proper. Igbaras Vice Mayor Jose Edmund Esporas said the municipal government did not construct a regular bridge due to lack of funds.

Mayor Jaime Esmeralda said one villager was already killed three years ago after a jeepney also fell into the river. Three others had drowned in separate incidents in the past years while attempting to cross the river after heavy rains.

GIs back in Subic for war games

BARELY A YEAR AFTER A RAPE case marred their last visit, some 500 US Marines were scheduled to arrive at Subic, Zambales, last night as an advance party for the annual joint exercises to be conducted with the Philippine military later this month.

The United States Embassy in Manila said yesterday around 7,000 Filipino and American troops will take part in two bilateral maneuvers—Talon Vision and Amphibious Landing Exercise (Phiblex) 2007—to be held on Oct. 16-31.

These will be held around Luzon, mainly in Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, Pampanga, Cavite and Palawan, said US Marines public affairs officer Capt. Burrell Parmer in a telephone interview.

The exercises could draw fresh anti-US protests, however, as they will be held close to the first anniversary of the alleged rape of a Filipino woman by a US Marine at the Subic freeport on the night of Nov. 1, 2005.

The Marine and three colleagues had just taken part in joint military exercises with Filipino troops then. They are still in the Philippines undergoing a rape trial that is due to wrap up this week.

Some 5,700 US personnel from the Marine bases in Okinawa—where the rape suspects were also based—and Sasebo, Japan, are taking part in this year's training exercises, Parmer said.

The Marines, especially the first-time visitors to the country, have received "Philippine cultural briefings to make sure they serve as good ambassadors when they come here," he said.

Volt Contreras

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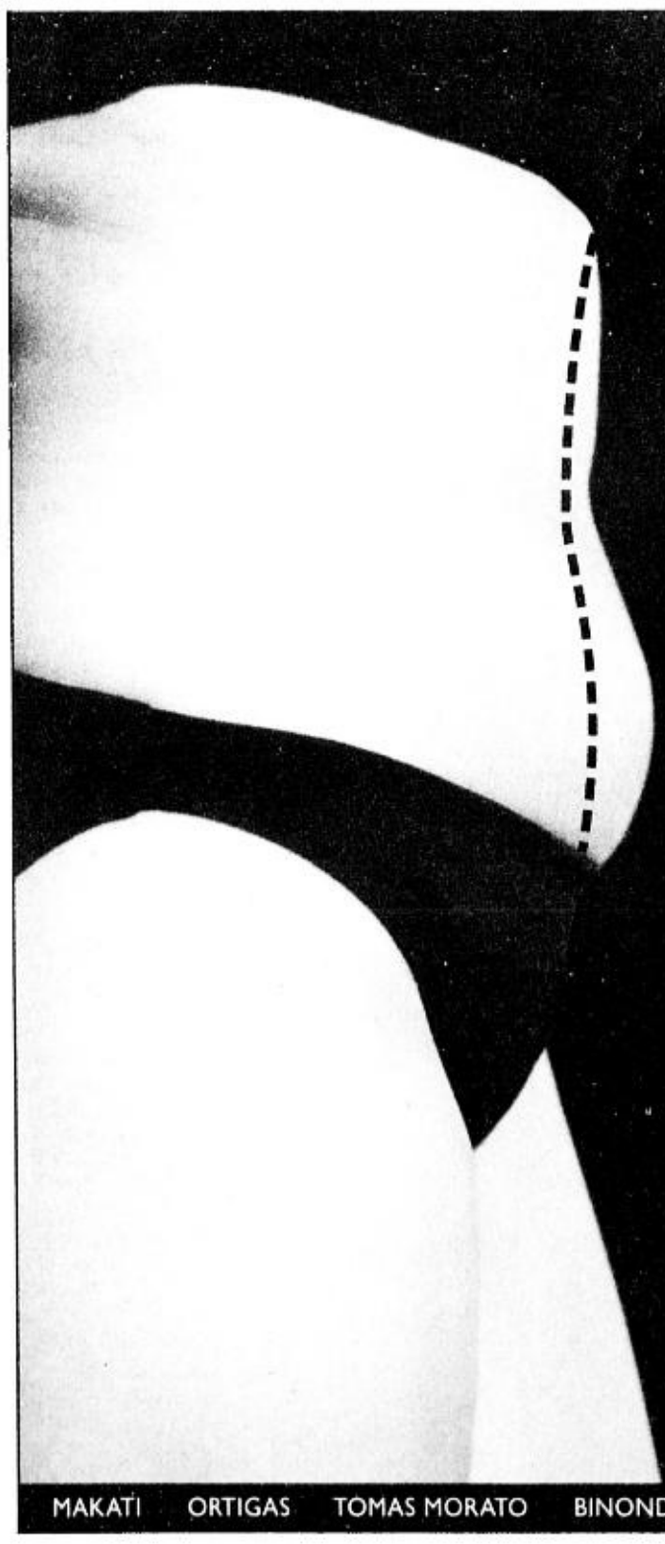

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marie france

'Arnis' boosts Fil-Ams' sense of pride

From page A1

ness each week, driving up to 48 kilometers from his home in the Gardena suburb, to conduct two-hour training sessions for kali enthusiasts of all ages at Filipino community centers in Los Angeles.

"There's something about a stick in the hand that is very Filipino," noted Noche.

Noche and other "backyard" eskrimadors started the Kali Klub project in 1999 and have since taught an average of 250 students a year, around 90 percent of them Fil-Ams aged 5 to over 40.

Since 2004, Kali Klub has been conducting classes in partnership with FilAm Arts (Association for the Advancement of Filipino American Arts & Culture), a nonprofit, multidisciplinary arts organization located on N. Vermont Avenue in LA.

PHOTOS BY EUGENE LARA/CONTRIBUTOR

BACK TO LAPU-LAPU: The Davao-based martial arts group Mandirigmang Kaliradman, which promotes the country's ancient arnis style of self-defense and combat, is the Philippine representative to the Martial Arts Festival ongoing in Chungju, South Korea.

Dealing with confusion

"I could have taught my (Fil-Am) students something else to help them deal with whatever confusion they may have about their cultural identity. But I am an eskrimador, and this is my way of helping them understand the complexities of being a Fil-Am," Noche said.

His family moved to the States when he was only 2 years old. At age 8 he began studying karate and, at age 12, picked up his first kali sticks—henceforth earning bruises and scars in a discipline that would "control my life."

At 40, Noche runs his own management consultancy and multimedia firm ATF1898—a proud reference to the year Filipinos declared their independence from Spain. But in a recent INQUIRER interview in Manila, he said he would rather be counted as a member of the "Filipino warrior class."

He was referring to the disciples of an ancient art that had been in progression long before foreign powers reached Philippine soil. Employing real swords or knives in its original form, kali survived by being "secretly practiced" during colonial times when Filipinos were prohibited from carrying weapons.

"It has been handed down from one generation to another, and has eventually made its way around the world. Now it is not only practiced by thousands of martial artists but also favored by elite military and law enforcement groups," Noche said.

Action flicks

Further proof of its global appeal, he noted, is the growing number of Hollywood action flicks that feature kali movements in their fight sequences.

Matt Damon, for example, in an interview on the hand-to-hand combat style of his "Jason Bourne" character, pronounced it as "kay-lee," he said. Vin Diesel had also acknowledged training in kali for his sci-fi flick, "The Chronicles of Riddick."

"Mission Impossible 3" and "Lara Croft Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life" featured brief fight scenes with the lead stars Tom Cruise and Angelina Jolie, respectively, "using Filipino fighting sticks," Noche said.

And Noche has this to say about Star Wars' Yoda: "My impression was that his moves (with the dazzling light saber) were more Filipino than samurai."

Through the centuries, the kali system—believed to have started in the Visayas—diversified through many individual masters around the country who continually added to its repertoire of attacks and defenses.

Basic principle

But the basic principle remains: "For weaponry to serve as extensions of the hand for maximum impact and reach," Noche explained.

And the weapons refer not only to the more familiar canes, but also to daggers, whips, chains, "a mere pen or a rolled newspaper." The movements would remain the same, with the fighter merely adjusting his range.

"Filipino martial arts (FMA) is the only one I know where you train on day one already with a weapon in your hand. Other martial arts begin training empty-handed and you get to use more intricate weapons as you progress," he said.

While maintaining that no particular combat method can be theoretically considered superior to another since it all depends on a fighter's skills, Noche pointed out: "In (FMA) I do have weapons in my hands, but losing them doesn't mean I could no longer do damage."

Take note, he said, that a hand that holds a rattan stick also forms a closed fist—which means that this hand can be used either to strike an enemy with the stick or, at closer range, to punch him.

And even with the hands full, the kali system is fluid enough to incorporate maneuvers for tripping or throw-downs (just as in judo or aikido) or for choking an opponent. This is an example of how the method, from being fundamentally based on frontal blows, has "evolved" with every master who improved on it.

The Noche style

Noche's own style—the Lameco Eskrima—is just one of the many branches in this evolution. Before he became a "guro" (teacher) to his students, Noche found his own, much revered "punong guro" (master) in another California-based Fil-Am, the late Edgar Sulite.

NOCHE: Being an "eskrimador" is his way of helping his students "understand the complexities of being a Fil-Am."

Founded by Sulite, Lameco stands for largo (long-range fighting), medio (medium-range) and corto (close-range)—or what Noche called the "synthesis" of these three orientations.

"We were part of Edgar's backyard group," he recalled, referring to his two fellow guro now running the Kali Klub, Arturo "Dino" Flores and Hospecio "Bud" Balani. "When Punong Guro died (of natural causes) in 1997, it would have been easy for us to bury the art with him."

"Keeping it alive is one thing, how to keep it alive is another," he said. "We can either go the commercial route (become full-time instructors, charge for private trainings, or hit the seminar circuit), or go the community route."

Noche had obviously taken the latter path, charging no personal fees for Kali Klub. "Everything we charge (as tuition) goes back to the program," he said.

The students are asked to provide their own black training attire, rattan sticks and safety goggles—"in addition to dedication, discipline and an open mind."

No mainstream draw

But for all that he's willing to share about his passion, Noche easily sensed during his recent visit to Manila that kali—even as a sport or fitness regimen—had never enjoyed a mainstream draw in the very nation that supposedly developed it.

"As a balikbayan, I can see that it has a following here but you still have to find it. It is not commercially available; it's taught in some schools but it can still go far," he said.

Last year's Southeast Asian Games in Manila finally included arnis—but this "new" event hardly got any media coverage. While Filipinos won three gold medals in arnis, the home crowd still reserved its loudest cheers for the other more popular fighting disciplines, especially tae kwon do.

Also, no local movie star has been able to popularize arnis the way a Bruce Lee or a Jackie Chan brought Chinese martial arts to the world. And yet here now is Noche reporting that "kay-lee" has entered Hollywood lore.

But Noche has made sure no student of his mispronounces anything; even with non-Fil-Ams in the class, Kali Klub preserves the original Filipino terms for specific drills and maneuvers ("armas" for weapons, "salok" for uppercut, "sagasa" for run over, etc.)

And with every "palo" (hit) or "ilag" (evasion) that he teaches his fellow Fil-Ams, this guro helps them rediscover their now distant ancestral heritage lest this kinship, like the primeval land bridges, erode in time.

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Royal bible on etiquette . . .

From page A1

are straying into previously unmentionable areas of the life of a modern girl—with a new book offering guidance on adultery, toplessness and celebrity gossip.

The first edition of Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage—known in Britain as the "toff's bible"—was published in 1769. Its tome on manners, Debrett's Correct Form, has guided high society for decades.

But, according to its editor, Jo Aitchison, the new book "Etiquette for Girls" is a sign that the traditional arbiters of civility are catching up with the times.

"It's a nod to the modern day," she told Reuters. "We're pulling Debrett's out of Victorian times and trying to make it relevant to today."

The book's advice ranges from how to conduct a sleaze-free office fling or a disease-free, one-night stand, to how to smoke at social occasions and what to do when you meet a celebrity.

No groping, fumbling

"Avoid dark-alley gropery and unladylike fumbling in the back of a cab," the guide says on the subject of one-night stands. "Discuss the necessaries to avoid planting any love children or disease, and you're away."

On smoking, the book decrees: "Always use a proper ashtray—never a wine bottle, flower pot or used plate—and avoid allowing smoke to billow out of the nostrils. It is also inelegant to leave the cigarette unsupported in the mouth."

But Aitchison insisted the book was not all about sex, lies and partying.

According to her, the core values of Debrett's remain—elegance, composure and dignity are all important, whether you are dining with the queen or cheating on your husband.

Survival guide

"We are trying to give girls confidence to behave in the correct way," she told Reuters. "It's a bit like a survival guide for modern life, so we have had to include certain subject matters that are new for Debrett's."

The world of celebrity is "peopled by psycho fans and fame hags," the book says, and is best treated with caution.

As well as advice on love affairs, the book also includes suggestions on less risqué subjects—how to behave properly on the way to work—"Don't sit on the bus and bellow down your mobile phone"—and what to take to a music festival—"earplugs and a pillow." *Reuters*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, October 4, 2006
26th Week in Ordinary Time
Francis of Assisi

1st Reading: Job 9:1-12, 14-16
Gospel: Luke 9:57-62

As Jesus and his disciples went on their way, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

To another Jesus said, "Follow me." But he answered, "Let me go back now, for first I want to bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their dead; as for you, leave them and proclaim the kingdom of God."

Another said to him, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to my family." And Jesus said to him, "Whoever has put his hand to the plow and looks back is not fit for the kingdom of God."

Commentary

Job knows that he cannot be in the right against God. It is God who is wise and who has made creation, and that God's strength and power is about life-sustaining the earth, sky, seasons, stars, and human beings. And man is judged by this awesome entity, and Job wonders seriously if God even hears his voice. Jesus is that awesomeness of God yet human like us, among us, calling us to singlehearted devotion, letting go of everything and trusting that God will care for us. Do we act like Job, or look back even though we've said yes to following God? Are we like Francis, the poor man passionately in love with the Son of Man who has nowhere to lay his head and looks to us to be his friends?

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Residents still in the dark dispute Meralco claim

From page A1

without power, according to Pablo Pan III, a deputy administrator of the National Electrification Administration.

But only 20 percent of households in Camarines Sur had no electricity as of last night, Pan said.

Asked exactly how many of its customers remained without power as of yesterday, Meralco vice president for corporate communications Elpi Cuna said there was no available data on that as Meralco only based its restoration rate on the number of circuits energized, and not on the number of customers who had gotten their power back.

Mixed profiles

Meralco senior public relations officer Dina Lomotan further explained that it was really difficult to count how many customers were still without power as there was no rule of thumb on how many customers were connected to each circuit.

"Customers in Metro Manila as well as in different parts of the franchise have mixed profiles. Thus, a circuit may serve just a few customers, while others, hundreds or as big as one barangay," she said.

Cuna said that "majority of our customers in the northern and central areas already have power."

"We're just cleaning up the areas so we can restore power to the isolated cases that still have no electricity. They'll get power back by tonight or tomorrow," Cuna said.

Presidential patience

Last weekend, Malacañang said that Meralco had committed to have all the lights back on in Metro Manila beginning Sunday night.

Meralco's failure to do so appeared to have severely tested President Macapagal-Arroyo's patience, prompting her to lean on the power firm to get the electricity flowing soonest, Palace officials said.

Damage caused by Milenyo on power facilities owned by the government and by provincial electric cooperatives has been placed initially at P527 million, according to the Department of Energy.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said total damage to National Transmission Corp. (Transco) lines, including those in Bicol, stood at P368 million.

Depending on rehab

Damage to the distribution lines of electric cooperatives in the area, on the other hand, was pegged at P159 million, he said.

Lotilla said these estimates could either go up or down in the coming days, depending on what would have to be done to rehabilitate the damaged facilities.

"We're still trying to see whether or not Transco's foundations will have to be redone. We don't know yet if the value of the damage will increase or decrease, although it can go down," said Lotilla.

"For Transco, it can go up if we will include the 69-kilovolt lines between Albay and Sorsogon. That's something they are verifying right now."

Meralco's restoration report stated that it had restored power to 97 percent of its distribution circuits all over its franchise area.

The distribution utility serves all of Metro Manila, Cavite and Rizal, and parts of Bulacan, Laguna, Quezon and Batangas.

Meralco said it had energized all of its distribution circuits in the northern area (from Malabon to Balintawak) and 99 percent in the central area (from Balintawak to Alabang).

Meralco earlier said that the figures on restorations did not necessarily reflect the percentage of customers whose households had been re-energized.

"We might have power in the circuits but we can't power up the lines until all the poles have been safely put back. We can't risk electrocution," Lomotan said the other day.

Yesterday, Lomotan said portions of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas and Quezon remained without power.

In some areas, this was due to downed lines that were mounted on Transco poles. These were those that fed or energized Meralco's substations.

Among those still without electricity as of yesterday afternoon was the headquarters of the Philippine Air Force in Pasay City.

The blackout at Villamor Air Base has "hindered a bit" the office work, most of which requires the use of computers, PAF spokesperson Maj. Augusto de la Pena told the INQUIRER.

But military flight operations were not affected, De la Pena said.

The PAF's next door neighbor, the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), was also crippled by the lack of power for four days. Electricity was fully restored on Monday.

"We don't know what's the problem (at Villamor)," De la Pena said.

The PAF's generator can only supply power to critical offices of the air base, such as the Command Operations Center, he said.

Meralco nowhere in sight

The PAF had contacted Meralco to fast-track the restoration of power at the camp.

As of yesterday, he said, "we haven't seen any Meralco crew here."

Regular power was restored only yesterday to the offices of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, the "nerve center" of relief operations.

The NDCC, the official source of news on casualties and the extent of the damage nationwide, had been running on generator-supplied electricity since Milenyo hit on Thursday.

Other buildings in Camp Aguinaldo had their power restored on Sunday.

With reports from Nikko Dizon and Dona Pazzibugan in Manila, and Inquirer Southern Luzon

Mother of all billboards . . .

From page A1

henceforth on top of the billboard situation," Ermita said.

He said he hoped that Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane, the government's main man in the enforcement of the rules on billboards, "would become very conscious of the role that is expected of him."

Ebdane, who was at the same briefing, replied: "I'm taking responsibility for that; we have to correct it immediately."

But unlike Ermita, Ebdane was less committal when asked whether the Guadalupe billboard, which he claimed he had not seen, had complied with the guidelines.

"Personally, I have no technical knowledge of what is standing there. We can prioritize that in our inspection. I'll pass by after this (briefing), I have not been passing that area," said Ebdane.

No sacred cows?

Ebdane noted that the rules made in 1982 had placed specific parameters on the size, height, elevation and placement of billboards but he could not give a specific reply on the Guadalupe billboard because he could not "give specific answer for things I have no personal knowledge of."

Asked whether he could promise the public that he would get tough on billboard owners and that there would be no sacred cows, Ebdane said: "I am not a politician. I don't promise, I just do it."

At the same briefing, Agnes Devanedera of the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, said the administrative order that the President would issue to crack down on giant billboards along national roads would cover four criteria:

Billboards felled by Typhoon "Milenyo" would be dismantled and not be replaced; those that have no permits; those that have permits but violate rules and regulations, specifically Presidential Decree No. 1096, or the National Building Code, and those built on or near sidewalks and roads.

The Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines said Milenyo toppled around 40 huge billboards.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. said the billboard owners needed to pass the four criteria to ensure that their ads would be allowed to stay up or be taken down.

Trimming mayors' powers

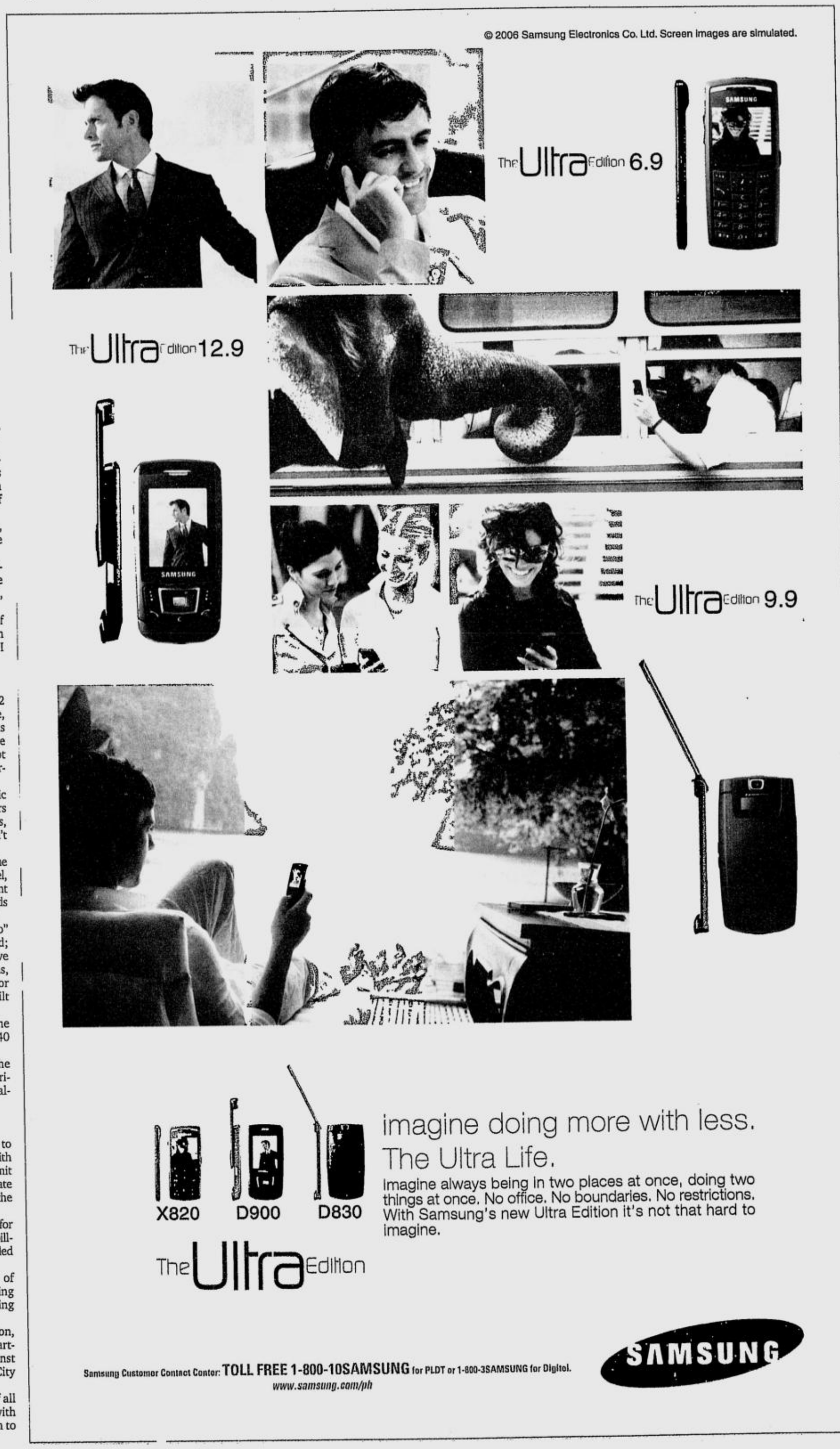
Local government officials, who are partly to blame for the proliferation of billboards with their lax processing, will be ordered to submit an inventory of all billboards on both private and public properties within five days from the issuance of the administrative order.

Ebdane will use the inventory as the basis for his team's inspection and evaluation of all billboards to decide which should be dismantled with the assistance of the police.

The President is trimming the powers of city mayors over the billboards by giving Ebdane sole jurisdiction over all advertising structures on national roads.

Devanedera said that from his evaluation, Ebdane would also recommend to the Department of Justice the filing of charges against both the billboard proprietors and the City Hall officials that gave the permits.

The President will also seek a review of all regulations on billboard construction with the possibility of endorsing new legislation to enact tougher rules.



21 cases solved in 10 weeks, claims PNP task force

By Alcuin Papa

NEWS OF THE DEADLY ATTACK ON Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento came just as the Philippine National Police was reporting that Task Force Usig was able to solve 21 cases of political killings well within the 10-week deadline laid down by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Quoting from a report he submitted to Ms Arroyo the other day, PNP Director General Oscar Calderon yesterday said that the 21 cases were solved in the past nine weeks with the filing of charges in court against identified suspects.

Ms Arroyo ordered the PNP on Aug. 1 to solve at least 10 extrajudicial killings within 10 weeks.

Calderon said that of the 21 killed, four were journalists and 17 were activists or members of militant party-list groups, and that 12 suspects were now in police custody.

He said he had assured Ms Arroyo of the "unrelenting and continuous effort to prevent these incidents from recurring and to arrest and prosecute suspects in the remaining unsolved cases."

NPA involved

PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon, task force chair, said there was evidence of the involvement of the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, in at least nine high-profile cases of slain Bayan Muna members in Metro Manila, Central Luzon, Cagayan Valley, Western Visayas and Bicol.

This was in addition to 10 cases earlier filed against purported CPP-NPA rebels believed to be directly involved in the murder of some members of party-list and cause-oriented groups, Razon said.

Another 12 cases were under investigation, with evidence also pointing to the culpability of the CPP-NPA, he said.

Razon told reporters yesterday that Task Force Usig had yet to receive initial reports on the Ramento killing.

The PNP spokesperson, Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, said that in most of the murders attributed to the CPP-NPA, Task Force Usig investigators had noted "a pattern wherein the victims were punished for counterrevolutionary activities or for mishandling party funds."

Psy-war, PR

But Renato Reyes, secretary general of the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, was unimpressed, saying the PNP report was both "psychological warfare and PR (public relations)."

"There's no substance, no real results as far as the victims are concerned," he said in a phone interview.

Reyes said the work of Task Force Usig was used "to muddle the issue because the PNP claims that the political killings are being perpetrated by the NPA."

Activist Aglipayan bishop ...

From page A1

ministration and who took up the cudgels for striking workers at Hacienda Luisita was stabbed dead yesterday morning inside his convent in Tarlac City, police said.

Bishop Alberto Ramento, 69, chair of the Supreme Council of Bishops of the Philippine Independent Church, was killed by two men who entered the San Sebastian Cathedral's convent through a damaged door, according to Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome, Tarlac police director.

Bartolome told the INQUIRER that an undetermined amount of money had been stolen from the bishop. "This is a case of robbery. We see no signs yet that this was politically motivated," he said.

But in Manila, Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said the murder of Ramento might have been intended to silence him and to end his support for many causes, including human rights, civil liberties and good governance.

"Ramento was a champion of the people's welfare, critic of political killings and a defender of civil liberties," said Ocampo, a deputy minority leader at the House of Representatives.

Another party-list lawmaker, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano, described Ramento as "a man of peace, a staunch advocate of genuine land reform, and a supporter of Filipino workers and peasants."

Police arrived at the crime scene a few minutes after residents reported hearing a commotion at the convent, Bartolome said.

He said police teams were working on a lead and hunting the perpetrators.

Bartolome said Ramento was attacked at about 4 a.m. and died of stab wounds. He said a bloodstained kitchen knife was found in the cathedral compound.

Irony

Militant groups were quick to condemn the killing of Ramento, cochair of the Philippine Peace Center and convenor of Pilgrims for Peace.

Danilo Ramos, secretary general of the peasant alliance Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, noted the irony in the murder of one who had condemned the rash of political killings.

"It is very ironic and sad that the bishop himself would be a victim of extrajudicial killings. Justice must be served," Ramos said in a statement.

In another statement, Roman Polintan, chair of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-Central Luzon, said his group attributed Ramento's killing to "government security forces."

"Our fear is that this is another killing that was based on the fact that the bishop was a staunch defender of the people's rights and welfare. It is the Arroyo administration which stands to gain from this killing," Polintan said.

Ramento was killed more than two weeks after the retirement of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division, who has been blamed for the murder of activists and rights workers in areas where he was posted.

Maj. Gen. Juanito Gomez, Palparan's successor at the 7th ID, desisted from commenting on the accusation that government forces had killed Ramento.

Speaking by phone from Fort Magsaysay in Nueva Ecija, Gomez said: "We would rather wait for the result of the police investigation."

2nd in Tarlac

Ramento was the second Aglipayan leader killed in Tarlac, after Rev. William Tadena, also a supporter of the striking workers at Hacienda Luisita.

According to the KMP, Ramento led the International Solidarity Mission last year at the sugar estate owned by the Cojuangco family, where at least seven workers and their supporters were killed in a confrontation with soldiers and policemen on Nov. 16, 2004.

Seven more union leaders were slain in the succeeding months.

KMP information officer Carl Ala said the police should stop treating the case as an ordinary robbery because Ramento started receiving death threats when he threw his support behind the workers at Luisita.

The human rights group Karapatan, of which Ramento was the provincial leader, said the bishop had received death threats from men believed to be members of the military.

"We decry and express our outrage over this heinous killing of a peace and human rights advocate," said Karapatan deputy secretary general Jigs Clamor.

Louder than words

House Deputy Minority Leader Alan Peter Cayetano said the situation was "getting ridiculous."

"The government portrays itself as a strong republic, but it can't protect journalists, activists, and now even priests in their own churches," Cayetano said, adding:

"The bottom line is, actions speak louder than words. Whatever kind of killing, the continued slaughter simply means that there's no deterrent to murder anymore. Obviously, the ones [responsible] feel that they can get away with [the murders]."

Ocampo said the Arroyo administration was accountable for failing to stop the political killings and to protect the rights of dissenters, be they activists, journalists or church people.

He said the killing of the bishop was further proof the Melo Commission was "a farce." *(See related story on Page A1.)*

"The death squads are unafraid of the commission because it serves their purpose of concealing the role of the military and police in the killings, and provides a podium for generals to justify the continuing carnage of innocents through black propaganda masquerading as testimonies," Ocampo said.

Deviating from pattern

Anakpawis' Mariano noted that the manner of the killing deviated from the pattern of previous extrajudicial murders perpetrated by motorcycle-riding assailants.

"It is as if the killers wanted to make it appear that the killing of Bishop Ramento was for a different motive," he said.

Mariano recalled that during the June 12 Independence Day Inter-Faith Prayer Rally at Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila, Ramento said he was opposed to Charter change because it was aimed at prolonging Ms Arroyo's stay in power and would "further undermine the national patrimony." *With an AP report*

An appeal to the Senate by the People of Bukidnon

We bring to your respective attentions the overwhelming clamor of the people of Bukidnon.

We are representatives of the various local government units, non-governmental organizations, indigenous people, the civil society, the general inhabitants and the more than 550 thousand voters of the Province of Bukidnon.

Last year, the House of Representatives approved a bill creating a new province of Bukidnon Del Sur.

The House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the said bill after considering that it has complied with the requisites provided under Section 461 of the Local Government Code. The annual income, territory and population on the two provinces are more than enough to satisfy the statutory requirements.

The bill is now pending approval before the Senate of the Philippines. The same was referred to the senate committee on local government chaired by Hon. Alfredo Lim. Several public hearings were conducted in Manila and in Bukidnon. The last public consultation was held at the Mindanao Polytechnic State College, Cagayan de Oro City last August 4, 2006 presided over Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Jr. the said proceedings revealed that the overwhelming majority of the people of Bukidnon favor the creation of the new province. It is noteworthy to stress that both the proponents and those who oppose the creation of the new province agree that the basic requirements have been complied with and that ultimately it should be the people of Bukidnon who should decide in a plebiscite as provided under Section 460 of the Local Government Code.

Despite sufficient time for the deliberation of the said bill, the said committee report has not yet been submitted, and the senate has not yet acted upon the matter. No tangible reason can explain such apparent delay.

The history of our legislative department is replete with bills calling for the creation of new provinces. Nowhere in its history however did the Senate of the Philippines disapproved a bill for the creation of a province as long as it complied with the basic requirements under the law. The creation of a province is always left to the ultimate will of the people as manifested in a plebiscite duly held for such purpose. In the present situation, all the requirements have been met yet up to now the matter has not been taken up by the senate.

In behalf of the people of Bukidnon, we appeal to the Senate to act on the matter the soonest possible time and let the people of Bukidnon decide their own destiny through a plebiscite.

With utmost respect and hope in our hearts, please heed this call.

Thank you.

Signed by:

Datu Relito A. Gawilan
Chieftain
Matigsalog Tribe

Lorenzo L. Dinlayan, Jr.
Chairman
Provincial Consultative Body

Datu Condrado M. Binayao
Datu Mandimati
Bukidnon Tribe

Datu Apolonio Timbangan
Chieftain
Higao-anon Tribe

Bae Genelinda Sulade
Chieftain
Tigwahanon

Datu Malda Pandian
Chieftain
Manobo Tribe

Datu Benjamin Omao
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Northern Buk. Free Farmers Coop. Inc. (NORBUFFCI)

Pablo M. Durias
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Zonsalda S. Galamito
President
Federation of Womens Organization of Bukidnon (FEDWOMB), Inc.

Ester E. Villarin
President
Panaghiusa sa Lalawigang Mag-Uuma sa Bukidnon

Lucita M. Damasco
President
Bukidnon Federation of Tribal Bae, Inc. (BFTB)

Datu Intunda Oswaldo G. Sighagan
Mindanao Alliance of Non-Christian Brotherhood Org. (MANOBO, Inc.)

Merla P. Pacnis
Manager
Central Bukidnon Agro-Forest Dev't. Multi-Purpose Coop.

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Municipal Mayor
Baungon, Bukidnon

Hon. Agustin H. Dionaldo
Municipal Mayor
Cabanglasan, Bukidnon

Hon. Fortunato E. Gudito
Municipal Mayor
Damulog, Bukidnon

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Municipal Mayor
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Hon. Felix S. Manzano
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Municipal Mayor
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Clarita C. Carbajal
ABC President
Malaybalay City, Bukidnon

Original signed

ADVT

Imelda wants human rights probe of Cory, FVR

By Alcuin Papa

IS THE SHOE ON THE OTHER foot? Now it's the camp of former First Lady Imelda Marcos urging families of victims of human rights abuses during the terms of former presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos to file their own human rights cases against the two former Chief Executives.

Ding Diaz, a spokesman of Imelda, said yesterday that the records of the Commission on Human Rights—formed 20 years ago after a People Power revolution toppled the Marcos dictatorship—showed that there were more abuses during the terms of Aquino and Ramos than during the Marcos years.

"Why are they [Aquino, Ramos] not being charged? Why only Marcos? Why don't they file cases against them?," Diaz asked.

Diaz said that based on the 1998 annual report of the CHR, the six-year term of Aquino had the most human rights violations, with cases exceeding the 9,000 mark.

The term of Ramos came in second with a little over 7,000 recorded human rights violations.

The 20-year rule of the Marcoses only had 1,500 violations, Diaz said. Hence, accusations that the Marcos regime was known for its violations of human rights were "grossly unfair," he argued.

Diaz did not look into the record of former President Joseph Estrada. He also said there was nothing wrong with "strong arm" tactics being used by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to protect the state against "rowdy troublemakers."

Senators' bickering sidetracks terror bill

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

TEMPERS FLARED AND THREATS FLEW AT the Senate session yesterday when Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile insisted on ending the interpellation period on the anti-terror bill so the measure that he had sponsored could be put more quickly to a vote.

Enrile was angered even more when Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who wanted an extended debate on the bill, pointed at him during an exchange.

As Enrile returned to his seat, he was overheard telling other senators: "*Tarantado itong Pimentel na ito. Sasampalin ko yan..*" (This Pimentel is a jerk. I've a good mind to smack him.)

The otherwise boring session was jolted when Enrile, the principal sponsor of Senate Bill 2137, or the proposed Anti-Terrorism Act, complained that the measure was not being taken up because those senators who wanted to interpellate him, including opposition Sen. Jamby Madrigal, were not around.

The bill defines the acts that constitute terrorism and prescribes the penalty of death to life imprisonment on those found guilty of it. The Senate version also allows terror suspects to be detained for up to 15 days without being charged.

Enrile demanded that the period of interpellation be closed to pave the way for the period of amendments and the bill's approval on second reading.

Sen. Richard Gordon, who has similarly expressed exasperation over the delay in the approval of his election automation bill, supported Enrile.

Pimentel objected, saying three more senators aside from Madrigal were lined up for interpellation. When Enrile tried to answer, Pimentel told him not to interrupt since he still had the floor.

Opposition senators have asked for more thorough deliberations on the measure as they fear an anti-terror law could be used by the Arroyo administration to stifle legitimate opposition.

Gesturing toward Enrile, Pimentel called on colleagues "not to dominate the proceedings here by anger."

"Don't point at me," said the incensed Enrile.

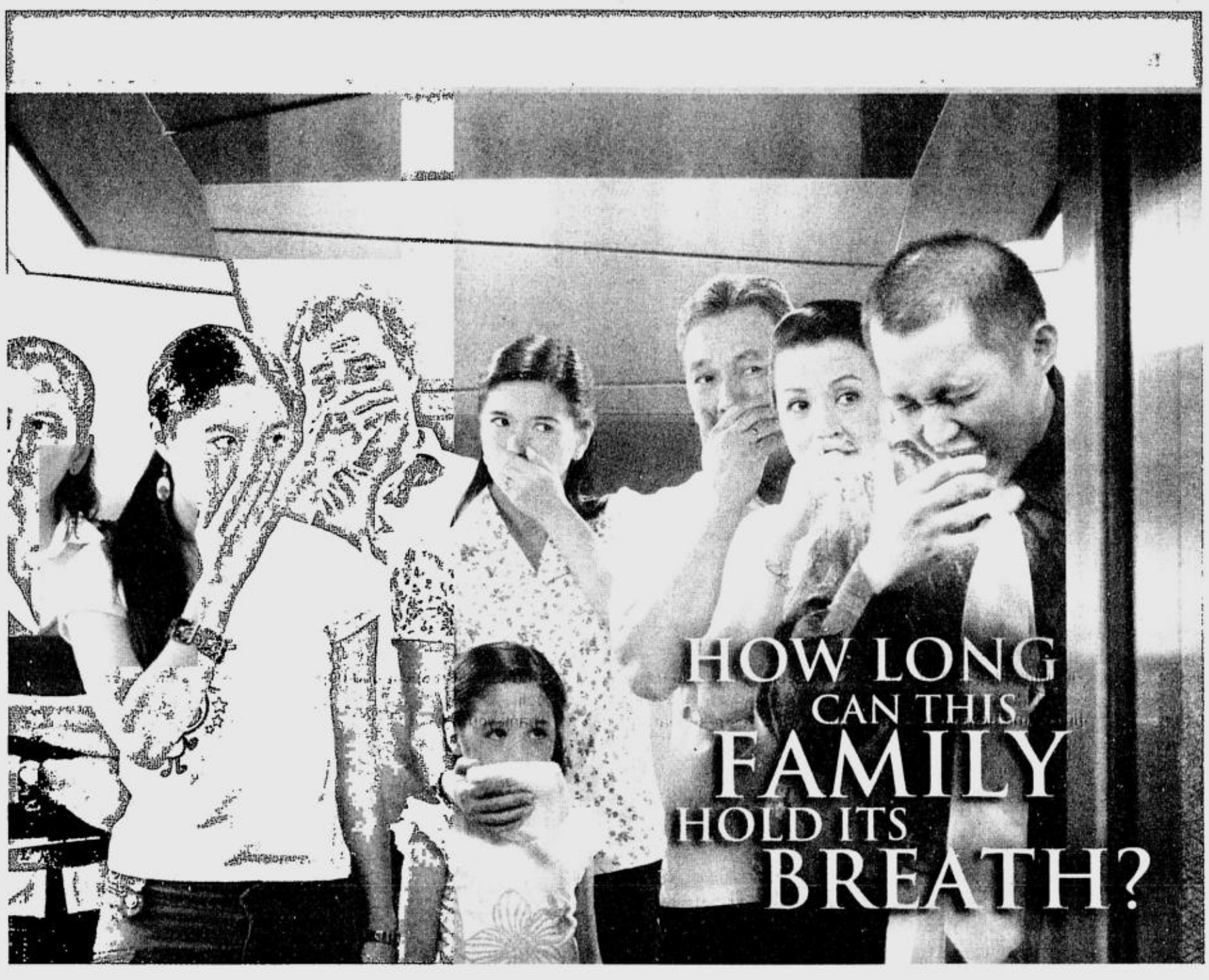
"Okay, I withdraw my pointing at you but just the same don't interrupt me," Pimentel said.

Enrile then made a motion to "divide the house," that is, that they vote on his motion to end the interpellation.

But Pimentel asked that Enrile's motion be declared out of order, saying the anti-terror bill was not even on the day's calendar.

"Why is it that a senator of this land can just stand and say 'I want this item tackled right here and now.' We also have to be guided by the rules," he said.

To defuse the tension, Senate President Manuel Villar suspended the session. After a recess that lasted more than an hour, the senators decided to adjourn.



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RP medical tourism industry to tap European market

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE GOVERNMENT'S AMBITIOUS medical tourism program is poised to penetrate the rich European market this month and hopes to earn $300 million in the process.

The Philippines has made contact with hospitals and patients in European countries like Russia, Romania, Poland, Italy and France that have expressed interest in several medical procedures which can be done locally.

Health Undersecretary Jade del Mundo, the official in charge of the program, yesterday said foreign patients expressed interest in the coronary bypass and hip replacement surgeries and the local program for geriatric care.

These procedures were generally 10 to 20 percent cheaper in the Philippines than in most European countries, he explained. A coronary artery bypass graft would cost $50,000 (roughly P2.5 million) in Europe and only $10,000 (around P500,000) here.

The low cost of procedures done by highly skilled Filipino doctors has started to attract patients from Spain, Germany and the United Kingdom.

"Europe is really a very good prospect," Del Mundo told the INQUIRER.

In tapping this rich market, the Philippines will have to compete with Singapore and India which, along with Thailand, have the most successful medical tourism programs in Asia.

Last year, Thailand earned $1.1 billion, India, $800 million and Singapore, $300 million. During the same period, the Philippines already earned a respectable $125 million without going full blast in its medical tourism program.

"If we become successful in the European market," Del Mundo said, "we could beat Singapore and the other top Asian players."

Europeans go to Singapore for more sophisticated and expensive procedures like cancer immune therapy which, he said, was already available in the Philippines.

Del Mundo said the grand launch of the program was scheduled on Nov. 20 and 21 at the Philippine Plaza Hotel. On Nov. 29, it will hold the first massage festival featuring indigenous massage therapies.

Drilon questions X-rating of Erap 'docu'

By TJ Burgonio

SEN. FRANKLIN DRILON HAS questioned the standards the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board used that caused it to ban a documentary on the life and times of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

At yesterday's Senate finance committee hearing on the MTRCB budget, Drilon said banning a work on the basis of it being purportedly libelous and undermining the people's faith in the government constituted prior restraint and was a throwback to the Marcos dictatorship.

Drilon, chair of the finance committee, chided MTRCB Chair Consoliza Laguardia and recommended the revision of the board's standards that, according to him, virtually expanded its mandate from mere classification to censorship.

"This is martial law. I would suggest that you review closely your IRR (implementing rules and regulations) because, really, you are in effect a censors board if you exercise your functions in the way your rules state it to be," he told Laguardia.

The MTRCB chief responded by saying the board was reviewing its rules, but its "X" rating on the Estrada documentary, "To Live for the Masses," stayed unless Malacañang reversed it.

The documentary is being reviewed by an ad hoc committee in Malacañang.

The MTRCB caused a furor in August when it gave the documentary, which depicts events before, during and after Estrada's short-lived presidency, an X-rating because it was "libelous" and would "undermine the public's faith in the government."

Estrada's camp retorted that the events depicted in the hour-long film were part of the country's history.

Under grilling by Drilon, Laguardia said the "X" rating was based on MTRCB standards and denied that Malacañang had a hand in it.

She explained that an "X" rating was attached to a work if it bordered on pornography, showed excessive violence, promoted drug use, undermined the people's confidence in the government, or was libelous.

The Estrada documentary, she said, "may destabilize the government, it may undermine the faith and confidence of the people in the government," noting that two of the board's three committees gave it an X-rating on this point, among others.

She said the documentary also maligned the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, who had called for the people power on Edsa that eventually led to Estrada's ouster in January 2001.

Drilon said these were not reasons for banning the film.

"I would strongly suggest, madam chairperson, that you review the standards you have because you're in effect a censors board rather than simply a classification board...

I would strongly suggest that you revise these," Drilon said.

In a later briefing, Drilon said some of the MTRCB's standards ran counter to the right of free speech embodied in the Constitution.

"In media, you cannot censor on the basis of libel," he said, adding that in a similar vein, banning material on grounds they undermine the people's confidence in government was tantamount to prior restraint.

"If you apply this standard to the movies being reviewed, then you will be exercising prior censorship, which has no place in a democratic society such as we have today," he said.

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Labor chief submits draft of 'retake' order

By Jerome Aning

LABOR SECRETARY ARTURO BRION SAID yesterday he had submitted to Malacañang a draft executive order mandating a retake of those portions of the June nursing board exam that were tainted by a leak of test questions.

Brion said the retake would be "for all," contrary to the insistence of some nursing graduates that the retake should be only for those who had benefited from the leak.

"Integrity is not divisible and the problem here is the integrity of the professional licensure exam. It (the retake) can't be for Luzon only [where the leak occurred], it must be for all," he told reporters in an interview.

Brion said the retake would only be on the exam portions on medical surgical nursing and psychiatric mental health.

The labor secretary said he met with officials of the Professional Regulation Commission late last week to discuss President Macapagal-Arroyo's directive on the retake as well as how to avoid a similar problem in government-administered tests in the future.

"They [PRC officials] said they are going to wait for the EO and that they would also like to meet with the President. I replied that it was up to them. What's important is for the EO to come out and then to hear their reaction," he said.

PRC officials had earlier said there was no need for a retake as the grades of the examinees had been recomputed around the portions that were leaked. They had been seeking an audience with the President apparently to press their no-retake stand.

In Bacolod City, government and church officials joined local nursing graduates and their parents in asking Ms Arroyo to spare them from a retake.

The Alliance of Concerned Parents had sought the officials' intercession and started a signature campaign to oppose the President's retake order.

Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarra said he supported the no-retake stand and would write a letter to the President.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said the innocent exam-takers should not be penalized for the leak, adding that this was unfair to them.

Bacolod Mayor Evelio Leonardia said a deeper study should be undertaken to spare the innocent.

The ACP members' children had graduated from Riverside College, Colegio de San Agustin, University of St. La Salle and Central Adventist College.

The parents pointed out there was no evidence the students from the four schools had benefited from the leak.

They passed the test "honestly, fairly, squarely and with a clean conscience," the parents said.

They also cited the additional expenses they would have to shoulder if their children were made to retake the exam.

They asked the President to cancel her retake order, appealing to her "wisdom, and motherly and humanitarian heart." *With Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas*

Chicken shortage, importation loom

By Christine O. Avendano

WITH A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER of poultry houses destroyed by typhoon "Milenyo," the government has decided to import chicken for the first time in three years in order to meet the expected large demand for white meat during the Christmas season.

Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban said his officials were still validating how much poultry had been damaged as he disclosed that "poultry houses in Southern Tagalog, Bicol and parts of Luzon had been devastated" by the storm.

"We thought of importing approximately three million kilos of chicken so it will not be a 'chickenless' Christmas for everybody," Panganiban said at a news conference in Malacañang yesterday.

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'Ombudsman ignored Supreme Court decision'

From page A1

Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro) had no power to do it, absolving all the Comelec officials, the Mega Pacific Consortium and the 13-day-old (Mega Pacific) eSolutions," Salonga told the INQUIRER.

He was referring to the time of the bidding when Mega Pacific eSolutions had been newly formed.

Casimiro headed the Ombudsman panel that looked into the possible criminal liability of Comelec officials and executives of Mega Pacific. The Office of the Ombudsman had been tasked by the high court to determine the liability of the Comelec officials, "if any."

The Casimiro panel also reversed its ruling of June 28 recommending the impeachment of Commissioner Resureccion Borra and the filing of charges against some Comelec officials and executives of Mega Pacific.

In its January 2004 decision, the high court said the awarding of the contract to Mega Pacific violated the law and the Comelec's own bidding rules. The Supreme Court also said that Mega Pacific's counting machines were vulnerable to "election fraud on a massive scale by means of just a few strokes."

But the Ombudsman panel said that the counting machines were accurate and that the deal was not disadvantageous to the government. Some 2,000 automated counting machines that the Comelec paid for were meant for the 2004 national elections. These are now lying idle and gathering dust in a warehouse.

"If she upholds Casimiro, (Ombudman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez) should be prepared to argue her own case before the Supreme Court. She's all alone. This means respondents will go to the Supreme Court," Salonga said.

"It is an unthinkable reversal of the oft-quoted, widely applauded decision penned by then justice, now Chief Justice, (Artemio) Panganiban in January 2004," Salonga said.

The former Senate President said many in the Office of the Ombudsman did not agree with the resolution of the Casimiro panel.

'Ombudsgirl'

Salonga said the dissenters included Maria Elena Roxas, a member of the Ombudsman's Field Investigation Office (FIO) that looked into the criminal liability of the Comelec officials and Mega Pacific executives. *(See story on Page A1.)*

Arroyo expressed outrage at the Ombudsman decision.

"This decision of the Ombudsgirl is unprecedented, outrageous and shocking," Arroyo said at a press conference, apparently referring to Gutierrez.

"That the Ombudsgirl should, in effect, overturn a decision of a higher court—the Supreme Court—is something I cannot understand," he said.

Arroyo said the Supreme Court ruling not only questioned the validity of the deal but the capacity of the Comelec to conduct an honest bidding.

"The issues here are that the bids and awards committee of the Comelec made the bidding rules in such a way that it would favor the single bidder and that is Mega Pacific Consortium . That's why it is fraudulent to begin with. The Ombudsgirl just brushed that aside ... (and) said the Comelec was in good faith. But how can (she say that) when from the beginning to the end badges of fraud attended the bidding process," Arroyo said.

'Protected by gov't'

He said: "The Supreme Court and the Senate agreed on all fronts. The Ombudsgirl takes the opposite view. This is unthinkable."

"This is very serious because it seems that this is the climate in this officialdom—no more respect for discipline abetted by reckless disregard for higher offices," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said it was up to the Supreme Court to decide what to do about the Ombudsman decision. He said the Ombudsman's decision did not augur well for future elections.

"I don't see how we can have credible elections with a Comelec that is protected by the government," he said. "If the Comelec cannot conduct honest bidding, it is not in a position to conduct honest elections."

The Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines called for the resignation of Gutierrez.

"It was a very bad decision, a mockery of justice," said ITFP president Augusto Lagman, one of the complainants in the case against the Comelec officials and executives of Mega Pacific.

"It's such a shame that they have not served the interest of the people," Lagman said, referring to the the Office of the Ombudsman.

He said the people "are not stupid and will not be deceived," by the Ombudsman's reasoning that the Comelec decision to award the contract to Mega Pacific was "an error of judgement, a misinterpretation of the law."

"Was it simple negligence that they awarded a contract to an 11-day-old company in violation of the government's procurement regulations? I don't think so," he said.

The Ombudsman's ruling, in effect, sets a bad precedent in the investigation of erring government officials. "What will now happen? Anybody now could just violate our laws and get away with it," said Lagman.

In the House of Representatives, Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said there was no conflict or legal infirmity in the Ombudsman decision.

It was "totally independent and has no legal bearing on an earlier decision made by the Supreme Court voiding the Comelec poll automation contract with Mega Pacific," Nograles said.

He said the graft case filed against Abalos and other Comelec officials before the Ombudsman was criminal in nature while the one filed before the Supreme Court was a civil case "where preponderance of evidence is enough."

"There is no conflict or inconsistency. The Supreme Court's nullification [was] a civil case where preponderance of evidence is enough. The Ombudsman's [was of] a criminal case where 'beyond reasonable doubt' or almost absolute certainty is the criteria to jail and to convict," he said.

"The weight of evidence necessary is totally different in both cases. One can be civilly liable but not criminally convicted. That's the law," he said.

'No criminal intent'

Nograles said the bidding and award of the automation contract were "public and transparent."

"There was no malice. Maybe an error in judgment but not with evident criminal intent," he said.

"Ombudsman Gutierrez is correct. She can't file a case based on perceived public opinion or sentiment and which she honestly knows she can't prosecute much less convict the respondents," Nograles said.

"It's her job to ensure that what she files has to convict. That's what prosecutors should be doing. File only if they have a chance to convict. Otherwise, they ought to dismiss," he said.

But Minority Leader Francis Escudero said the Ombudsman decision contradicted the high court's ruling which found the Comelec's deal with Mega Pacific consortium to be "illegal and imprudent."

"I can't see how and why this was the result of the Ombudsman investigation when it was the Supreme Court that ordered an investigation and the filing of charges," Escudero said.

Conflicting decisions

"There seems to be an inconsistency or conflict between the Supreme Court view, decisions and opinion on the matter compared with that of the Ombudsman. Only one of them can be correct as there is no way that both decisions can stand side by side," he said.

Escudero said the Ombudsman should thoroughly explain the reasons behind its decision to clear Abalos and the other poll officials.

"The Ombudsman owes it to the public to be transparent in all its actions. Whatever questions there may be, they should answer and clarify," he said.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales said the Ombudsman decision damaged its own credibility and cast doubts on the integrity of next year's election.

"This is terrible. *Bastusan na talaga* (This is total shamelessness)," Rosales said. "It's a total reversal of what the Supreme Court ordered and this was done without any basis."

Motion for reconsideration

Rosales noted that the case had dragged on for two years only for the Ombudsman to say that there was "no iota of evidence" against Comelec officials.

"This raises questions about the Ombudsman's credibility and integrity [of the polls]. It was given P1 billion to fight graft, but if this is the case, it means the Ombudsman is not serious about fighting graft," Rosales said.

"Another implication is that you can't rely on the Ombudsman to clean up the Comelec. This has something to do with the 2007 elections. That was the first thing that I thought of when I heard about this," she said.

Cibac party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva said his party's lawyers were studying whether to file a motion of reconsideration in the Ombudsman or go directly to the Supreme Court. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

TIMELINE

April 15, 2003 - As part of its modernization program, the Commission on Elections awards a P1.3-billion poll automation contract to Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc. The members of the Comelec en banc are Chair Benjamin Abalos, Resurreccion Borra, Florentino Tuason Jr., Luzviminda Tancangco, Rufino Javier, Ralph Lantion and Mehol Sadain.

Aug. 5, 2003 - The Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines (ITFP), along with eight private individuals including former ITFP president and Comelec computerization technical consultant Augusto C. Lagman, submits a petition with the Supreme Court to nullify the Mega Pacific contract.

Jan. 13, 2004 - The high court declares null and void the Mega Pacific contract on the grounds that the Comelec did not abide by the law in its bidding procedures. In its decision, the court also asks the Office of the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability of public officials involved.

Jan. 22, 2004 - Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. files before the Ombudsman graft charges against Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and six other Comelec commissioners over the alleged irregularities in the contract.

Dec. 12, 2005 - Senate adopts Blue Ribbon Committee report finding members of the Comelec Bids and Awards Committee liable for the "Comelec modernization scam." The BAC members are directors Eduardo Mejos (chair) and directors Gideon de Guzman, Bartolomeo Sinocruz, Lamberto Llamas and the now retired Jose Balbuena (members).

May 3, 2006 - The high court orders the Ombudsman "to report, on pain of contempt its final determination whether probable cause exists against any of the public officials involved" in the Mega Pacific computerization deal by June 30.

June 30, 2006 - The Ombudsman issues a resolution that contains findings that Congress may use to initiate impeachment proceedings against Borra. The Ombudsman also orders the dismissal of the five Comelec BAC members that qualified Mega Pacific and the filing of charges against them before the Sandiganbayan; and the filing of criminal charges against the eight incorporators of the consortium.

July 11, 2006 - Supreme Court says that the Ombudsman's report is incomplete and orders the Ombudsman to finally determine whether there is strong ground to pursue the impeachment and graft charges against the Comelec officials. *Mel Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research*

SC: No comment; ruling to void contract stands

From page A1

Because the complainants against the Comelec and Mega Pacific might go to the Supreme Court to question the Ombudsman's decision, Ismael Khan Jr., the high tribunal's public information officer, said he did not want to preempt the court's decision.

The complainants were Kilosbayan Foundation represented by former Senate President Jovito Salonga, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel and the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines represented by Augusto Lagman.

The high tribunal's earlier decision voiding the Mega Pacific contract for being irregular stands despite the Ombudsman's latest findings, according to Khan. He said the issue of culpability was different from the contract's validity.

He noted that the Comelec and the Ombudsman both recognized that the contract was void.

The Supreme Court had yet to receive a copy of the Ombudsman resolution, according to Khan.

"It would be inappropriate for us to comment on the report, assuming that we have a copy, in view of the fact that the case may reach us because we don't know what the Kilosbayan or Senator Pimentel will do," Khan told reporters.

He said Salonga and Pimentel could file a case in the Supreme Court if they thought the Ombudsman committed a grave abuse of discretion in issuing its decision.

"If they think there was possible grave abuse, not just abuse but grave abuse of discretion, they may. Whether or not that will be given due course by the Supreme Court, of course that's another matter," he said.

Khan said that after the Supreme Court receives a copy of the Ombudsman report, the justices, sitting en banc, would deliberate on it. But as to whether the justices would deem it sufficient or not, he refused to speculate.

Contrary report cites Abalos links to Mega owners

From page A1

officers. Records established Chairman Abalos' close and personal relationship with spouses Tansipek—two principal incorporators of MPEI," the comment said.

The FIO found that Abalos was a wedding godfather to a child of the Tansipeks.

"The fact of this close and personal links between Abalos and the Tansipeks cannot but persuade and influence subordinate officials of (the) Comelec to adopt the same attitude as the resulting facts have shown," the document said.

"Notably, crucial and glaring violations were committed by Comelec officials through all phases of the bidding process—from the determination of the eligibility to the evaluation of the proposals until the final deliberation of the award," Roxas said in her comment submitted to the Ombudsman panel that conducted hearings on the Mega Pacific deal.

A copy of Roxas' signed comment duly noted by her superior, Assistant Ombudsman Melchor Arthur Carandang, was given to the INQUIRER by former Senate President Jovito Salonga, one of the complainants in the Comelec graft case.

The Ombudsman's FIO, having looked into the criminal liability of the Comelec and MPC officials, was one of the complainants in the graft case against the officials after the Supreme Court voided the deal in January 2004.

Salonga said the FIO had worked on the case since the time of former Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo.

The Ombudsman panel chaired by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro apparently found no merit in the FIO's comment.

The Casimiro panel announced on Monday that it was clearing Abalos and all the respondents, including Mega Pacific executives, of any wrongdoing.

It also reversed its June 28 decision recommending the impeachment of Commissioner Resureccion Borra and the dismissal of Comelec executives involved in the procurement of the counting machines supposedly for the 2004 elections.

The Ombudsman panel ruled that while the contract remained void, there was no criminal intent on the part of the respondents when they pushed for the automation deal. This was a view the FIO disagreed with.

Inconsistent with law

The FIO said the Comelec may not be faulted when it considered the financial offer of Mega Pacific better than the offer of the other bidder, TIMC. But the poll body may be faulted when it entered into a contract with MPEI because the contract contained provisions not consistent with law and the request for a proposal.

"The contract which was declared illegal by the Supreme Court contained provisions relating to the contract amount totaling P1.24 billion and that amount included the cost relating to the price of the equipment to be supplied," Roxas said.

Exchange rate

The FIO said that instead of paying Mega Pacific at the rate of P58 to $1, the Comelec should have used the prevailing foreign currency exchange rate as of the date of the opening of the financial bids.

"This could have generated savings in the substantial amount of P62,051,904.80," she said.

While the Casimiro panel didn't see malice, bad faith or partiality when the Comelec commissioners and officials awarded the contract to MPC in April 2003, the FIO said the respondents may be charged criminally, administratively and civilly.

"The issues in the instant case may appear to be complicated. In reality, however, the issues to be addressed are simple enough," Roxas said in her comment.

"Was there an illegal transaction? Should herein respondents be held responsible therefore? To these questions, given the established facts and the evidence presented by the complainant (FIO), there can only be one answer and that is in the affirmative," she said.

SC deadline

The Ombudsman panel issued the June 28 resolution recommending the impeachment of Borra and the filing of criminal charges against and the dismissal of the members of the bids and awards committee.

The panel issued the resolution to beat the June 30 deadline set by the Supreme Court for the Ombudsman to finish its probe.

The high court had threatened to cite the Ombudsman in contempt for failing to come up with findings on the criminal liability of the Comelec officials and executives of MPC more than two years after the contract was voided.

The panel at the time said Abalos and the other respondents not recommended for either impeachment or criminal charges were subject to further investigation.

'Clarificatory hearings'

The panel conducted a series of "clarificatory hearings" that ended in late August.

During the hearings, Comelec officials and MPC executives presented evidence to show that the bidding process was aboveboard, that the automated counting machines were accurate, that the software satisfied the requirements and that the MPC contract was far from disadvantageous to the government.

CHR chair chides Melo body: Why send a subpoena?

From page A1

we would have been cooperative, anyway," she said.

Quisumbing refused to answer questions from the commission regarding CHR data on extrajudicial killings. Instead, she invited the commission members to visit CHR headquarters and go over the human rights data gathered by her office.

"They can look at our statistics, but not necessarily subpoena the CHR," Quisumbing said after the hearing.

But she added: "This is not a turf issue." She said she would welcome a dialogue with the commission to make its work "more effective."

Understanding

Also after the hearing, Melo said he understood Quisumbing's position.

"Understandably, she may be a little sensitive. She may feel that the Melo Commission is intruding into the CHR, and she may not take it in a very good light," he said.

According to Melo, the commission only wanted to know if the data on extrajudicial killings gathered by the Philippine National Police's Task Force Usig, the human rights group Karapatan, the London-based Amnesty International and the CHR tallied, or had common names.

"If they don't tally, then something was wrong with the reporting [of the cases]," Melo said.

He said he was willing to send a team to examine the CHR data. "We are interested in the records," he said.

Beyond numbers

But Quisumbing said the commission should go beyond statistics.

"These [cases] involve people. Let us find out who are these people. Call the victims, find out how they can help, what information they have," she said. "If, for instance, XYZ appears in the Karapatan, Usig and CHR lists, what will you do?"

She also pointed out that no one had ever been convicted for human rights violations. "When the case is filed in court, it becomes an ordinary crime," she said.

Quisumbing was only the fourth "witness" to appear before the Melo Commission, the fact-finding body formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in August to look into the unabated murder of journalists and leftist activists.

The PNP had earlier organized Task Force Usig in response to Ms Arroyo's order to investigate the spate of political killings, but she later formed the Melo Commission in response to foreign governments' assailing of the "climate of impunity" under her administration.

At least 30 days

Without the participation of leftist groups and the families of the victims, the commission's fact-finding task will have to end with a one-sided report, Melo admitted yesterday.

"We will have to terminate the proceedings if they don't come over ... and we will have to base our findings on the testimonies of the witnesses who have appeared," he said at a press conference.

Melo said the commission was giving the leftist groups and the families at least 30 days to think things over.

If they decide to participate, the commission is open to extending its deadline beyond December, he said.

"We cannot just wait for them forever," Melo said. "We would probably give them a month or so to come forward."

He said that contrary to published criticisms that it was calling only military and police officials to testify, the commission had wanted the families of missing University of the Philippines students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan to give their accounts first.

When the families of the two students turned down the invitation, "we had to call our first available witnesses," he said.

SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI COLLEGE

Now that **Saint Francis of Assisi College** is in its **25th commemorative year** of its foundation, it is my constant wish and watchful concern for the entire Franciscan family, its officers, administrators, teaching and non-teaching personnel, students and parents, to remain united in living the charisms - "faith and humility" - of the school's seraphic father, St. Francis of Assisi whose feast day we are remembering today. I hope that this charisms which gave birth to our school and which nurtured and sustained us in our transforming journey towards excellent service in educating the youth, fructify to even more grace-filled years in the furtherance of our calling.

With a grateful heart, I thank the Almighty God for the past 25 years. In hopeful expectation, I stand before Him waiting for His fresh anointing upon our school towards wherever and however He wills us to move to after 25 years, today.

My congratulations on the **25th Founding Anniversary of Saint Francis of Assisi College** – the school that **serves, shares and cares.**

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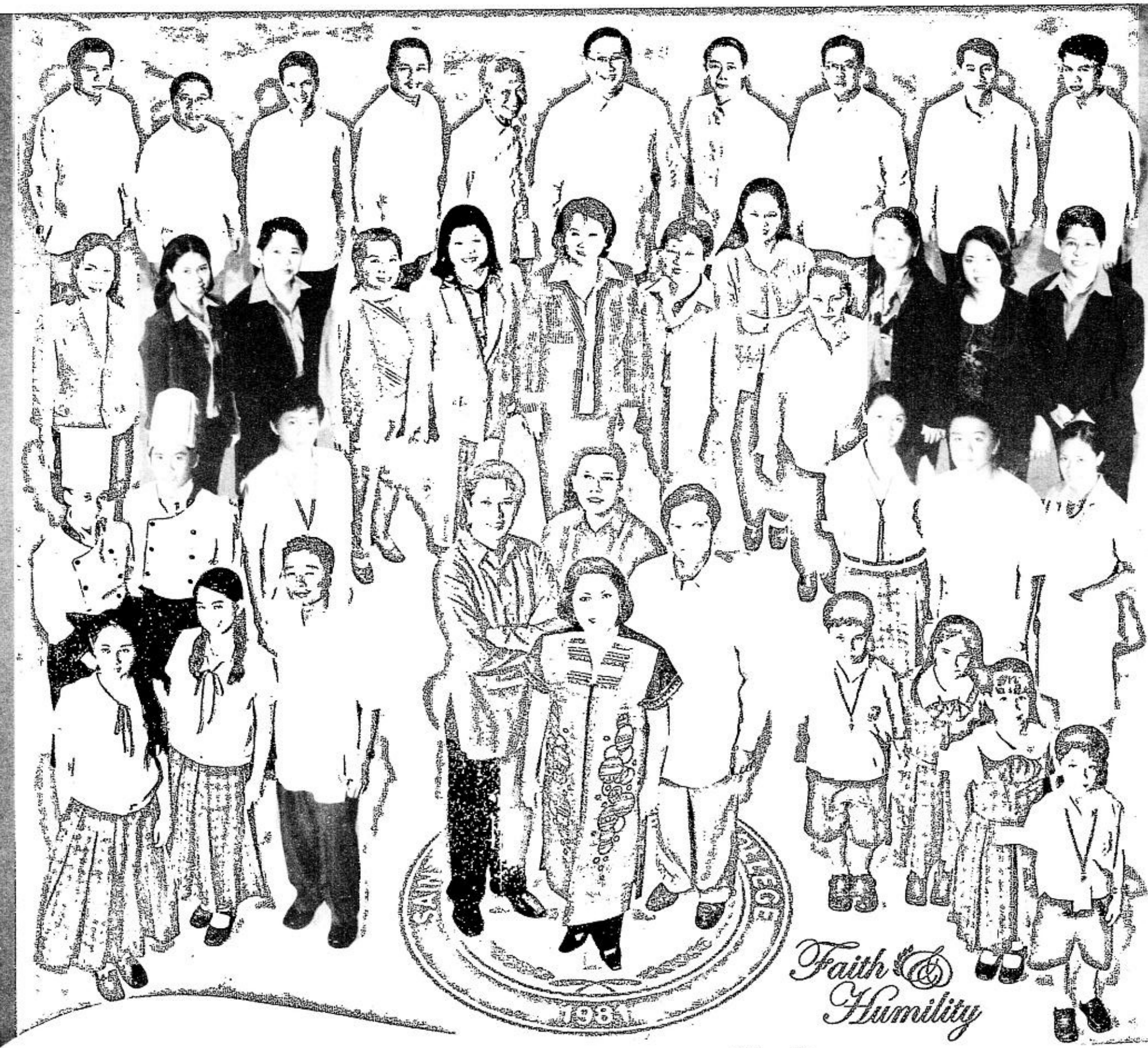

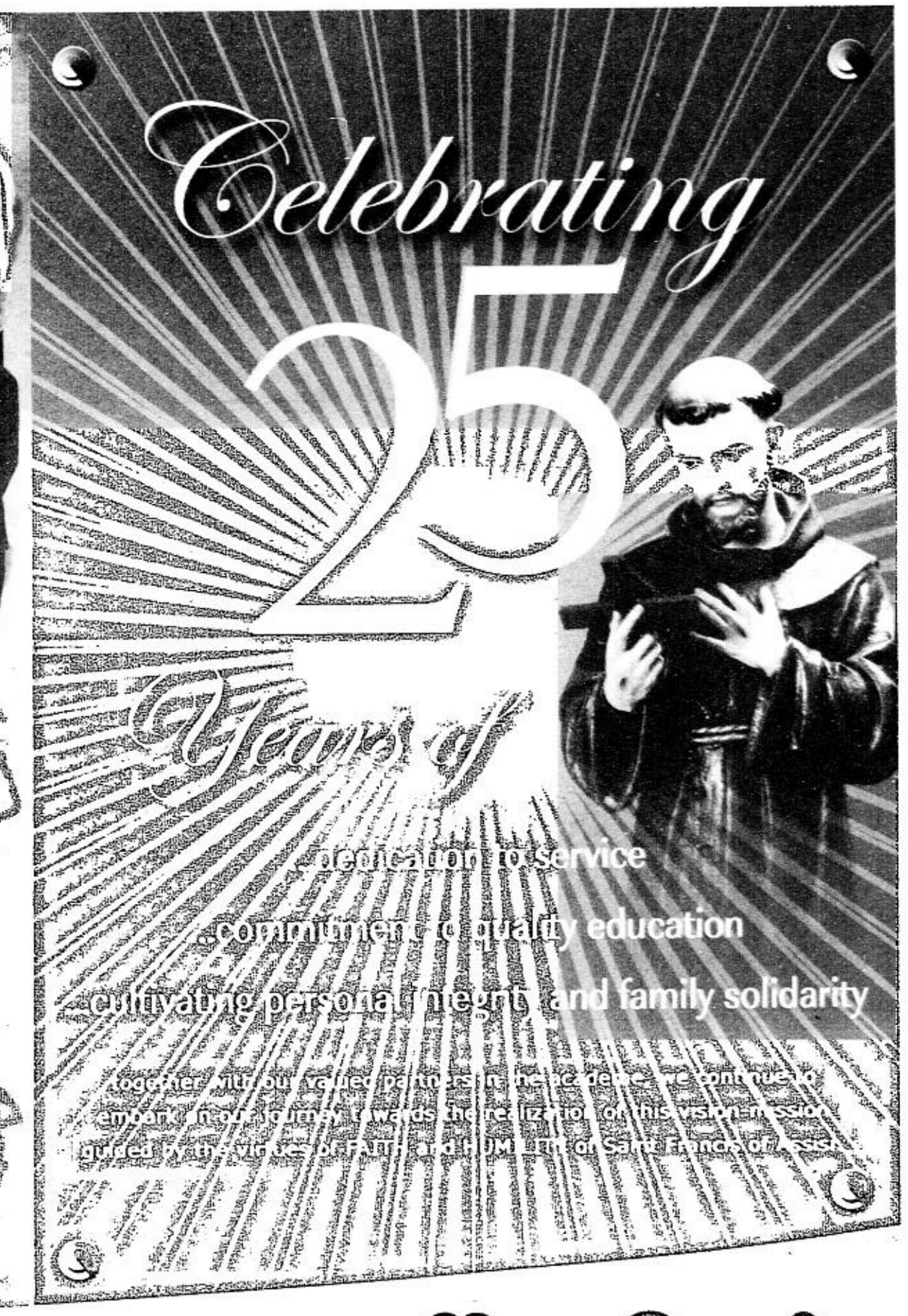

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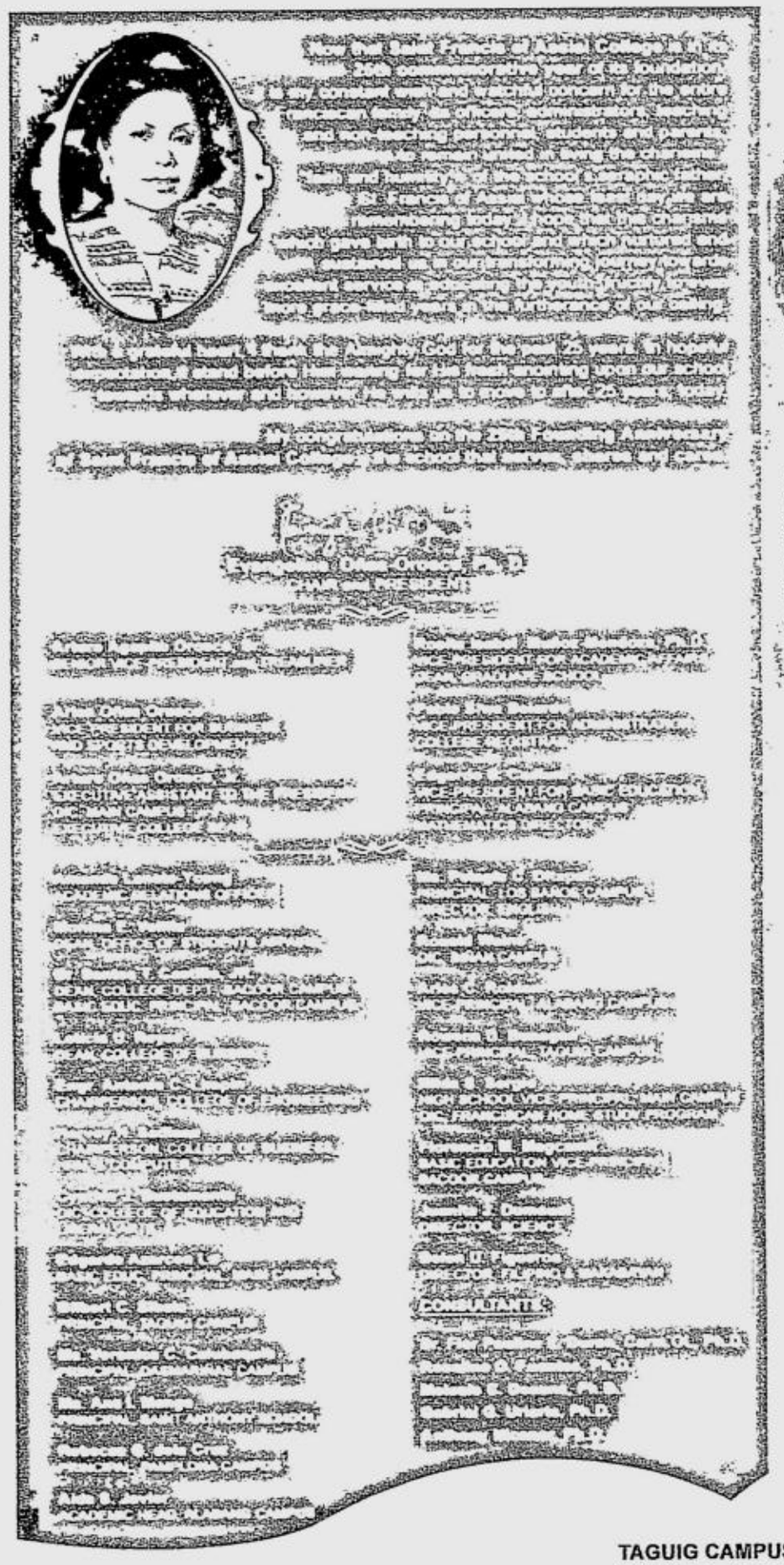

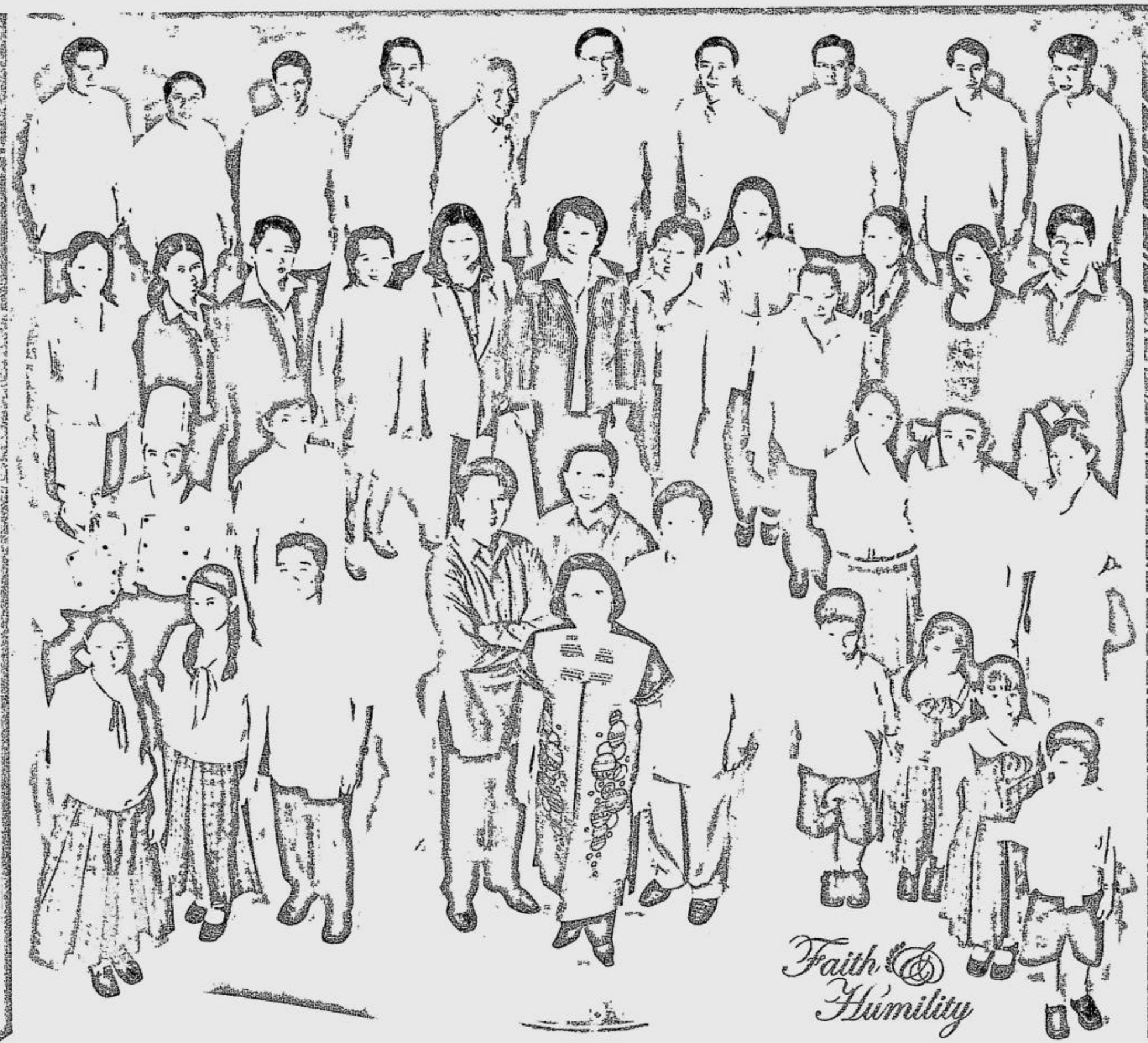

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2006

ISSN 0116-2642

INQUIRER

Vol. 21 No. 298

OPINION

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
• Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
• P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
• Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
• Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 • Advertising 897-4807
• Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
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Extremism

EDITORIALS

BILLBOARDS AND THEIR REGULATION BY THE state have nothing to do with freedom of expression. Neither billboards nor graffiti can be considered political or human rights. Billboards are a vehicle for delivering advertising, and like all forms of advertising, their use can be regulated. The only question is what form and manner the regulating will take.

This is where government policy enters the picture. Arrived at methodically, a government policy on billboards drafted with due consultation, means no one can accuse the government of being whimsical or illogical. Enforced consistently and reasonably, no one can say the government is being unfair, and businesses can obtain what they crave, which is predictability.

Moderation is desirable in all things, and that includes advertising. Metro Manila's recent experience with typhoon "Milenyo" has led to a sustained public outcry against billboards. Government, after typically shrugging its shoulders, throwing up its hands and then pointing fingers (Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane being the perfect example of an official who did all three), now says it will do something. What should be done is, of course, different from what will be done, which is, a typical, meaningless, knee-jerk reaction. The public's upset about billboards? Dismantle them! All of them! Now! Welcome to the Hysterical Republic.

Several things need to be kept in mind at this point. The first is that excessive one-upmanship among billboard builders led to the gigantic billboards that were torn down by the typhoon, with fatal consequences. The lesson from those billboards is threefold: there must be a limit as to size, and a ban on placing billboards where their collapse poses a danger to life, limb and infrastructure, which means that the big ones should be banished from major thoroughfares in population centers at the very least. The second is, many other billboards of a smaller size were blown away, their absence made more noticeable because they had become so plentiful to begin with. Therefore, the construction of smaller billboards, and their quantity, must be regulated, too. Third, other forms of commercial signage were also destroyed, which suggests the need for certain standards in the construction of all free-standing commercial signs.

And there is the question of urban blight caused by too much advertising. Practically every rentable roofing and wall space along major roads has been given up to billboards, the columns and other spaces of the LRT and MRT being the most obvious examples. There is nothing wrong with the government gaining advertising income from bus and train stations, but as any Filipino who have gone abroad can testify, even in the most capitalist of countries, there is such a thing as over-saturation. At the very least, what's permitted are advertisements that don't pose a menace to human life in times of emergency.

Which suggests what's called for at the present time: Look at the best practices abroad for useful guides to the billboard debate.

The trees

WE NOTE, AS WELL, THE MASSACRE OF TREES that took place during the typhoon. The winds were simply too strong for even some of the sturdiest species in the metropolis and countryside. But the limitations of transplanting trees (balled and replanted trees suffered greatly in Fort Bonifacio) as well as road-widening and sidewalk-modification, which cuts into the root network of older trees, surely took its toll.

Again, we do not need a burst of enthusiasm in which every bare spot is planted with a twig. We need tree experts to come up with policies to keep the surviving trees healthy, and for the allocation of space for future growth. And while everyone is frustrated with Meralco, neighborhood associations need to do more to properly prune trees during the typhoon season.

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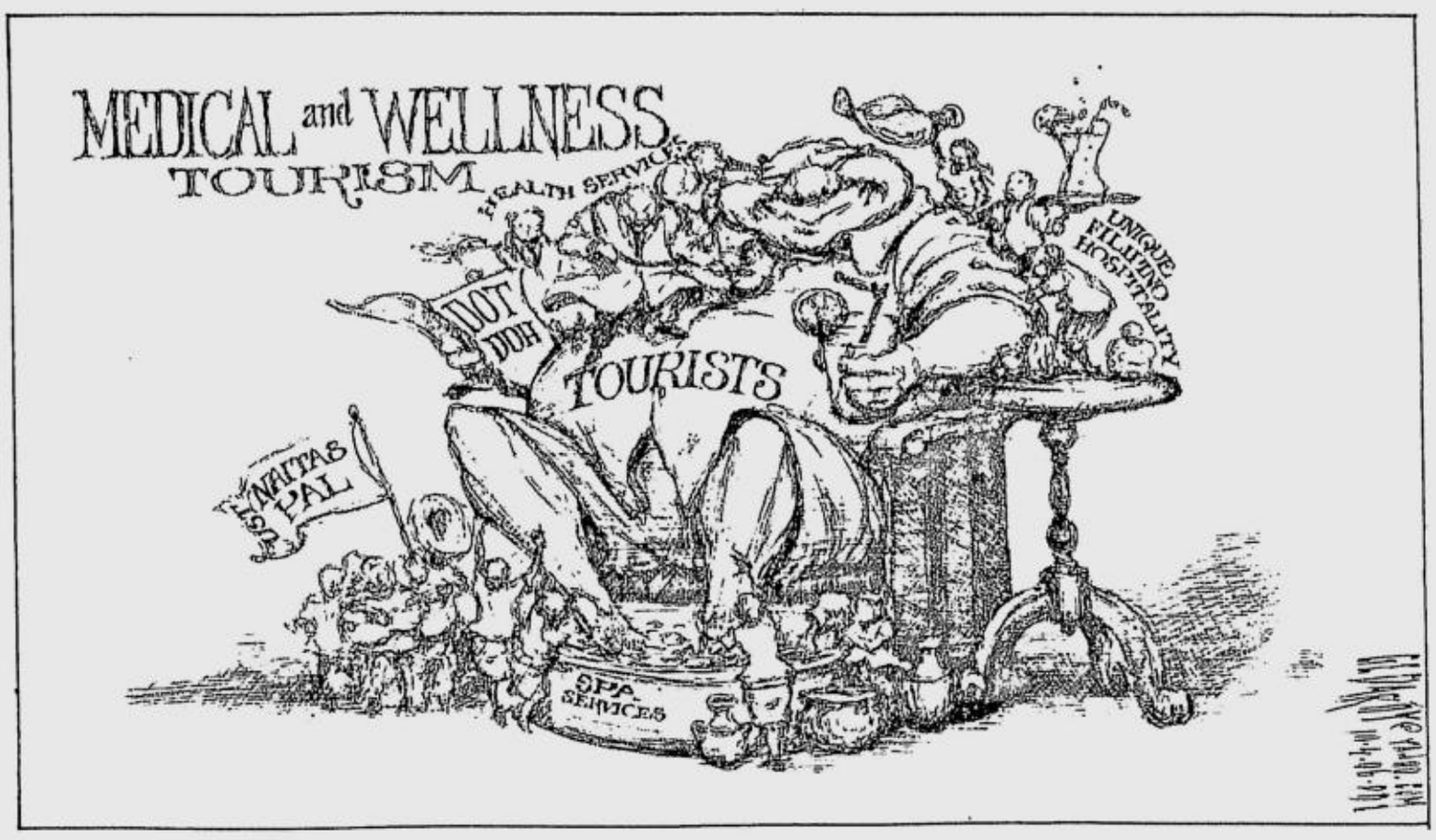

Ban the big, bad billboards!

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

BILLBOARD ADVERTISERS ARE FIGHTING A losing battle against the snowballing clamor to ban giant billboards along major streets. The toppling of more than 40 billboards along Edsa, and North Luzon and South Expressways during the brief passage of Typhoon Milenyo, crushing two vehicles and killing at least one person, makes billboards evil in the eyes of the people, no matter what the Outdoor Advertisers Association of the Philippines (OAAP) say.

The OAAP says there are more than 2,000 billboards along these three major roads but only 40 were toppled by the strong typhoon. That's not a bad percentage, it says.

Tell that to the family of the driver who was killed by a falling steel billboard. Tell that to the owners and passengers of the van and bus that were crushed by falling billboards. Not even one billboard should fall if the OAAP and the government and their engineers and contractors were not negligent. And 40 fallen billboards are 40 too many.

What happened was force majeure, they say. Hogwash! The Philippines is in the path of frequent typhoons, and engineers and makers of the frames for billboards should have taken that into consideration. In fact, the National Building Code should be revised to make structures stronger and make them withstand strong typhoons like Milenyo. And city engineers and mayors who approve the permits should also be made liable whenever a structure collapses.

For it is actually the concupiscence, corruption and greed of local government units that allow what Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago calls the "billboard blight." The billboard advertisers pay the LGUs a fee for every billboard that is put up. The city engineer is supposed to study the plans to make sure the structures are safe and sturdy before giving any permit. But as is well known among private contractors, they can get any permit from the city engineers' offices, even for substandard structures, "if the price is right." In fact, clerks and fixers in these offices vie with one another to help applicants for permits, expecting to get a commission from that "price." And the mayor looks at the accumulating collections for the building permits as manna from heaven. So like the permits and franchises for buses, jeepneys and tricycles that are already too many, the LGUs keep churning out building permits for billboards because they mean money in the till.

The OAAP claims billboards are actually "tourist attractions," citing the examples of Las Vegas, Times Square in Manhattan, Ginza in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore. "You see tourists standing on Times Square, Ginza or Las Vegas just gawking at the bright, beautiful blinking lights of their billboards," Frank Abueva, president of the OAAP, told the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday.

"Maybe so," I said, "but those billboards don't fall on hapless motorists."

"Billboards are a gauge of a nation's economy," the OAAP insists. "It is an indication that its commerce is vibrant. The most progressive cities have many billboards."

But there is such a thing as "too much." Many of the so-called progressive cities in the United States are already complaining about the billboard blight along their highways, prompting a Joyce Kilmer wannabe to write this verse:

"I think that I shall never see
"A poem as lovely as a tree.
"Indeed unless the billboards fall,
"I think I'll never see a tree at all."

Well, in Metro Manila they're falling all right. But pity the people they choose to fall on. Now, every time I have to walk within several meters of a billboard, I can't help but feel threatened by it. I could feel it devilishly waiting for me to pass under it and then choosing that time to fall on me.

"Let's make our streets safe," says the Philippine National Police. But that means not only stopping muggers, thieves and reckless drivers, but also preventing billboards from falling. And as long as there are billboards up there, some will have to fall according to Murphy's Law.

But let's face it, our streets would be terribly dark at night, making them havens for holdup artists, without the bright lights from billboards. Local governments, who pay for the electric consumption of street lights, are stingy when it comes to paying for public services like street lights. It is scary to walk on many streets in Metro Manila because of the lack of street lights. All the underpasses along Edsa, including those with signs showing the smiling face of President Macapagal-Arroyo and announcing that the subway is being "improved," are dark even during the day. Only that one connecting C-5 Road to Katipunan Avenue is brightly lighted.

The OAAP is amenable to more and stricter regulations but not a total ban. It is even asking that it be made the clearing house for outdoor advertising so that it can discipline erring members. "Many of the substandard billboards were put up by small operators who are not our members," the OAAP claims. But it also admits that many of the billboards that collapsed were constructed by their members.

If MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando can have his way, he will ban all billboards. You can't deny that they distract motorists and can cause accidents. So he wants all the road rights-of-way to be billboard-free, including those on the center islands.

But take my word for it. After the furor dies down, the billboards will rise again. There's plenty of money in them.

Stop the killings!

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

(Conclusion)

HOW DO WE STOP THE KILLINGS?

Three things.

First, precisely with forums like this. The point is to bring international attention and pressure to bear on the Philippine government for those killings. They have no place in the global democratic community. No, they have no place in the global civilized community.

The importance of this can never be sufficiently belabored. There is one point about the killings that seems to escape the notice of foreign journalist organizations that have rightly condemned the atrocity. That is the fact that most of the victims have worked outside Metro Manila. That is the case in particular with the journalists. There seems to be an implicit taboo on the killing of journalists in Metro Manila. Nearly to a man or woman, the journalists have been killed outside the capital.

It's not hard to see where that taboo comes from. It doesn't come from the would-be assassins' healthy respect for the national media, it comes from the would-be assassins' healthy fear of international opinion. If the killers have nothing to do with government, they stand to be tracked down resolutely with the flailing of the international press. If the killers have to do with government, the government stands to be reviled passionately with the driving of the international press.

The confinement of the murders to the countryside is surprisingly true as well for the activists. Though a few activists have been murdered in the fringes of Metro Manila, most have been felled well outside of it. The people of Bayan Muna that I've talked to at least have told me they still felt relatively safe—such as any dissenter can still feel safe in the Philippines—in Metro Manila. But that was before the recent murder of Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay's security aide, Pablo Glean. If that is a political killing, and it looks every inch so, it is a scary pass. It ups the ante on the mayhem.

Three groups of people are particularly vital in bringing pressure to bear on the Philippine government for this. The first is the international press and human rights community. As GMA found out in her latest trip abroad, where she was hounded by the human rights and press groups wherever she went, her local constituents may be deaf to the cries of the dying, but not so the world.

The second is the Filipino press community abroad, specifically the one in the United States which is the biggest. And the third is the larger Filipino community abroad, again particularly in the US, which is the biggest, most articulate and most vocal. The last two were active participants in Edsa II or People Power II, the new technology, encompassing e-mail and cellular phone, which allowed Filipinos abroad to participate in the events in the home country in real time. Filipinos abroad didn't just watch the ousting of Erap as spectators, they completely literally took part in it.

If the ousting of Erap remains contentious to this day, stopping the killings is not. That goes beyond partisan loyalties and concerns. We do not stop the killings in the Philippines, we promote dictatorship in the Philippines. It is as simple as that.

The second thing to do is to fight the tangle of justification for the killings, specifically the ideology or culture of war and national security.

One of the astonishing things I found out early last year when I went to several provinces to talk about the killings of journalists was the ease with which some members of my audience seem to have factored in, and even rationalized, the killings. One expressly wondered if the victims hadn't brought their fate upon themselves by "going overboard." The radio commentators in particular, they said, were dripping with venom all over the airwaves.

My reply to this was and is: You grant that half of the victims were disguised journalists, the other half would have been true ones. The latter would have been exposing corruption in high places. If only one of them died, it would have been intolerable. For a whole tribe of them to do so, it gives government, who has a sacred duty to protect them, no reason to exist.

More than that, nothing justifies the murder of journalists, paper-thin or rock-solid as their credentials might be. Not corruption, not intemperate language, not stepping on the toes of people. At worst, where they are corrupt and intemperate, they deserve censure, not death. At best, where they are doing their jobs, they deserve medals, not coffins.

Finally, how do we stop the killings?

Well, to what do we owe the killings finally?

We owe them to the fact that we have a regime that, like the martial-law one, is nearly universally held to have no electoral mandate. No, that like the martial-law one is nearly universally held in contempt by the public. We owe the killings to the fact that the current regime, like the martial-law regime, has resorted to defending illegitimate rule by force, or to defending dictatorship—how else call a rule without the people's mandate?—by the ways of dictatorship. We owe the killings to the fact that the current regime, like the martial-law regime, is trying to kill resistance by killing resisters, to kill protest by killing protesters.

How to stop the killings finally?

Lose Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. You will forgive me if I do not use the honorific "President" before her name.

Last year, at the heart of the crisis in government, an archbishop came out to say, "But ousting Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo won't solve all our problems." What I said then, I say now: "It won't solve all our problems, true, but it sure as hell will solve a great many of them." Certainly, it will stop this problem. Certainly, it will stop the killings.

Losers?

COMMENTARY

Tanya Gaurano
Institute on Church and Social Issues

"THE PLACE STINKS AND THE ALLEYS ARE TOO narrow," one of our interviewers complained. She was describing the urban poor community we had gone to for their on-the-job training.

The site is, in fact, disorderly and cramped because the residents are currently in the process of buying and developing their land through the government's Community Mortgage Program. But I found the comment striking because the interviewers were from urban poor communities themselves, most of them sons or daughters of community leaders. I was surprised that even those who are from similar communities are unaware (oblivious, indifferent, ignorant are some of the other descriptions that come to mind) of the plight of those who are poorer than they are. Further, the statement revealed disgust for the surroundings and, worse, that the attitude toward these people or communities is often one of aversion and revulsion.

The interviewers are involved in a project we are doing with the city government of Las Piñas called, "Capacity-building for Poverty Reduction: Local Poverty Mapping and Monitoring in Las Piñas City." As the title suggests, it aims to build the capacity of the city government through a poverty profiling survey of urban poor households in the city, which it is hoped will enable them to have a systematic way of targeting their anti-poverty programs. We thought that by getting interviewers from those near the communities, we would not have a hard time orienting them to the conditions they would see in the areas.

So the issue raised was really an eye-opener for me: If those who are nearest these informal settlements cannot understand why the poor are the way they are, this can only be an indication of how the rest of society views them.

The poor are often depicted as unkempt, unschooled scalawags who are left to fend for themselves by their own devices and are expected to keep to their own "kind." Unruly behavior is excusable—*"ugaling iskwater kasi"*—and finding criminals among them is a given, *"dala na rin ng kahirapan."* They are reduced to being nothing more than victims of their situation without any hope for improvement: *"Eh ganyan na talaga ang mga 'yan eh."*

But is that really what they are, losers who do not have the motivation or the capacity to help themselves?

Like us, I know they don't take pleasure in being exposed to, much less living near or in, unsanitary areas. But instead of spending their time cleaning and beautifying their community, they would rather look for work to feed their families. I believe that the disgust with which they are regarded is a reflection of our indifference toward their plight. Due to hard times, we have become more and more concerned only with things that directly affect us. If we see a child begging on the streets or an adolescent forced to sell her body for a few hundred pesos a night, we take that as an inevitable consequence of the poor performance of the economy or the government's inability to extend assistance to them.

The widespread apathy not only allows such ineffectiveness to prevail, it contributes to the inability of the poor to get out of their situation. Because they are limited by their lack of education and skills training in their participation in economic activities, their chances of improving their lives are also restricted. Too absorbed in our own problems or maybe too jaded to care, we look the other way when realities like the deplorable situation of the community we went to hit us in the face. Or worse, we blame the poor for being in that situation.

I remember explaining to the interviewer that the main reason we were doing the survey was to identify the most pressing needs of these people so that the local government could come up with strategies to address them. I told him that by doing the survey, we were playing an important part in making this happen for these poor families.

And that holds true for us as well. Each one of us has a part to play in ensuring that they are able to face the challenges that beset them and to steer the course of their lives toward a better future. We need to stop looking at their appalling situation as something unavoidable and start looking for ways to help them get out of it.

We have to call attention to the fact that despite programs that are supposed to benefit them, they remain hungry. Because only by raising awareness and by protesting that this situation is unacceptable can we hope to effect positive change in their lives. We need to stop looking at the poor as good-for-nothing individuals who are suffering because of their own doing. Instead we should look at them as potentially productive citizens of the country, if they could only have access to basic services, such as food, shelter and education, which most of us take for granted. Lastly, we have to include them in processes that directly affect them so that they will come to realize that, given the chance, they also have the capacity and the ability to improve their own situation and to finally get out of the *"mabahong lugar na may masikip na daanan"* in which they live.

Empowered

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE MORNING "MILENYO" STRUCK, I LOOKED FOR A BARber for my father and then returned home, as winds blew and the electricity was cut off, to finish my column.

A few weeks back, I'd signed up with the British Meteorological Office for a free e-mail alert system (www.tropicalstormrisk.com), so I knew supertyphoon "Xangsane" (Milenyo's international name) was about to hit, but it just shows you how we can end up underestimating our risks. The last supertyphoon we had was, according to the weather bureau, "Rosing" in 1995 and really, how many of us remember that? Let's make sure we don't end up disempowered again, sitting and grumbling in the dark, when the next disaster strikes.

Let me share some of the lessons I picked up dealing with Milenyo, specifically with the problem of not having electricity.

Lights please

It's revealing how we Filipinos describe our power outages as *"walang ilaw"* (no lights). We can survive the day without power, and we can cook with gas, but not having lights at night seem to represent the worst of a disaster, making the night seem so much longer (and do you notice how the squadrons of mosquitoes attack more viciously in the dark?).

Candles and kerosene lamps used to work quite well, and I guess they still have their place, but I'd avoid them if you have elderly people and very young children in the house. I prefer emergency lights with a rechargeable battery pack. I'd avoid those gadgets that try to incorporate all kinds of gadgets like a radio and a fan—those will run out of juice within an hour or so and you'll end up without lights, without sounds. (I'll get back to the sounds in a while.)

But also be picky with the emergency lights. First, don't get the ones that use regular batteries because they run out too quickly. Get one with rechargeable battery packs inside. Once you've charged them, they can last several hours.

The problem though with these rechargeable battery packs is that they're still the nickel type, which has a memory effect, meaning that even if you've fully recharged them, they sometimes "think" they've run out of power. The manufacturers recommend that you fully recharge the packs and then use the lamps until they completely run out of energy, before recharging.

And that's where we can run into problems. We tend to rush out to buy these lamps when there's a power outage, and use them for a few hours. Once the electricity returns, we put the emergency lights in storage and forget about them. I guess we'll just have to make it a habit to charge and discharge the emergency lamps.

One more point: It's always tempting to buy a unit with long fluorescent lights. Here's one instance where size does matter, and it's the long ones that lose out. Get a lamp with one of those energy-saving, low-wattage bulbs. They're small but last much longer.

Sounds please

Next to dark nights, what Filipinos fear most is quiet, the lack of "sounds." And yet I was surprised to find, during Milenyo, how many of my friends didn't have battery-operated radios at home. It seems the "transistor radio" has become a Stone-Age gadget.

I love radios and still keep several battery-operated ones. They're important for keeping track of what's happening, although with Milenyo, I realized that much of the AM band has been taken over by religious groups, with more sermons than news. The big networks offer news but can sometimes end up as strident as the religious broadcasts, castigating government, Meralco and whoever else they can blame, adding to the seething frustration we all had waiting for the lights to come back. I'd advise you to tune in for a few minutes, then shift to some station with music.

You might want to invest in a radio with good short-wave reception, so you can listen to stations like the BBC. Better still, you might want to try Worldspace (www.worldspace.com) which uses satellite broadcasts to give you jazz, classical, rock, World music plus BBC, CNN and even National Public Radio (the only intelligent American radio network). I began to subscribe to Worldspace two years ago and it's worked perfectly through many storms, including Milenyo. Worldspace does require a little antenna which has to be obstruction-free and sometimes that can be a hassle. I had an accident about two weeks ago when adjusting the antenna, literally sliding off the roof but landing, fortunately, on soft soil. Milenyo did dislodge the antenna, but this time around I got to fix it without any major incident, Tiny my dachshund fretfully running around on the ground and warning me to be careful.

Internet please

If you can't live without music, then make sure you have a reliable battery-operated player for cassettes (also Stone-Age?), CDs or MP3. Some of these electronic toys have long-lasting batteries.

Then, too, on the high end, you can use your laptop battery not just for sounds, but for videos. But laptop batteries are notorious for their short life, so if you're really desperate, you might want to buy an extra battery (which could set you back a few thousand pesos).

We're now getting to the ultimate question: Should you get a generator or not? During the "dark days" in the 1990s, when we had power outages almost daily, my father got a 5-horsepower, diesel-operated generator, but every time he tried using it, the dogs and cats would run berserk so it went into storage. My father then thought about getting a 40-horsepower silent generator, but that would have cost, prepare yourselves, a million pesos.

In the end, he got two local improvised generators that use a car battery. You charge it by plugging it into Meralco and the energy is stored in the battery. An invertor converts the energy back into regular electricity, with the gadget providing several outlets into which you can plug small appliances. The car battery generators had gone unused for some time and my father was ready to dispose of them, but when I replaced the old batteries with new batteries they worked quite well. And when Milenyo came around, the generators lasted three days with energy to spare. Each generator powered one light and one electric fan, while recharging batteries for my radios. Even better, I got to recharge my laptop three times to give me nine hours of computer use, including the Internet. I did worry about how steady the battery's current might be, but, knock on wood, I don't think it ruined the computer circuitry, considering I'm still able to do this column.

I haven't seen these battery generators being sold lately, but I did spot some small solar generators at a hardware store in Makati last year. I didn't get them because I felt they weren't cost effective; they cost from P8,000 to P30,000 each but could only power very small appliances. But in retrospect, maybe they're worth exploring.

With or without Milenyo, we should be exploring these alternative sources of power.

Prayers for Sorsogon

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

I HAVE KNOWN SORSOGON CITY MAYOR SALLY Lee for some years now, and if reports say she was moved to tears while briefing President Macapagal-Arroyo on the damage sustained by the city from "Typhoon Milenyo," then the situation in Sorsogon—the city and the province—is dire, indeed.

Mayor Lee strikes me as a woman of extraordinary strength and unshakeable faith, and it takes more than the usual crisis to disturb her equilibrium. At this point, my prayers go out to her and her husband the governor, and the people of Sorsogon. As they strive to rebuild from "square one," to recover from the devastation of Milenyo and return the city to the promise and progress it had been showing, may they be blessed with the prayers and support of a caring nation and a responsive national government.

* * *

"IT took one major typhoon, a needless death and scores injured to shake public consciousness and condemn billboards," writes John Silva, a senior consultant for the National Museum and a member of the Heritage Conservation Society. The fallen billboards "may have been caused by nature's wrath but corporate rapaciousness wasn't too far behind."

In the wake of a public awakened to the threats posed by the giant billboards, Silva says the bill filed by Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago that seeks to regulate the erection and location of billboards now has much greater chances of getting passed. "If approved, the bill will, among other things, severely limit the number of billboards, will not exceed 300 sq ft in size, will not be allowed in areas that will impair scenic vistas or jeopardize traffic signs, and will not be erected within 1,000 feet of a historic site, school, church, or park. In other words, a much needed and very welcome law for our country."

But to understand why those huge, unsightly and cluttered billboards were able to proliferate to such an extent that they posed an actual threat to life and limb at the height of Milenyo, Silva says the public needs to understand the "corporate" roots of the phenomenon, and the tangled relationships between outdoor advertising companies, marketers, local governments and consumers.

"First, the billboard companies do not exist or multiply on their own. They are supported (by) local and multinational companies who use billboards as a cheap advertising alternative. That's the first mistake. Marketing studies repeatedly show that when you have unregulated billboard clutter, the message is diluted. Cell phones, fast food, real estate and adult diaper billboards side by side and on top of each other no longer have an effect except to be randomly chaotic and ugly."

* * *

STUDIES have also shown that billboard clutter affects motorists and commuters (their target market) beyond just annoying the hell out of them. The findings reveal, said Silva, that "they raise blood pressure levels, distract and create accidents, and now, can topple and kill us. Instead of selling their wares, companies are now complicit in physically harming their market."

He adds that "companies know that billboards deflate real estate prices and discourage tourism. We have a situation where there is an untrammeled use of billboards at the expense of a real estate market and a tourism industry that could use a shot in the arm. It's hard calling the country a retiree/vacation paradise with the current billboard blight."

Silva likewise bears down on local government executives who are now trying to mask their culpability by "howling" about the dangers posed by the billboards and the determination to ban these structures.

"Certificates of compliance are issued with regularity to billboard companies by various city governments," he notes. "Billboard companies have gotten away with stating that their structures can withstand winds of 200 kph. But billboard insiders also admit that unscrupulous subcontractors can scrimp on building materials and erect structures whose wind resistance claim can't be relied on. Typhoon Milenyo's deadly winds by the time it got to Manila was reported between 110-140 kph… In Manila, you can get a certificate of compliance for a large billboard for a fee of P80,000. Count the billboards and multiply the fee and their howling may just be that."

* * *

SILVA likewise has words for the media, whose coverage of the impact of fallen billboards leaves much to be desired. "When the media report how traffic was snarled for hours due to fallen billboards, it misleads people to think it's all a motorist inconvenience," he notes.

"Meralco representatives have stated that aside from downed trees, fallen billboards have destroyed power lines and caused blackouts. Trees are relatively short and you can saw them easily. A fallen billboard, four stories high can down large transformers that have to be blow-torched to extricate them, prolonging the power outages Manila residents have experienced. Every day without power translates into billions of pesos lost in commerce, airport and transportation disruptions, business shutdown, schools and universities closed, and vital centers like hospitals and military camps jeopardized. A fallen billboard is not just a nuisance. It is a national economic calamity."

And yet, outdoor advertisers are let off the hook much too easily. "It seems a puzzle why the media do not identify the billboard companies whose billboards have fallen, nor do they state what company was actually advertising on those billboards. The public has the right to know who's responsible, just like the public knew who was responsible for the Guimaras oil spill. And now, with deaths involved, the public, particularly the aggrieved, should know who are criminally liable."

Inhuman

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

YEARS AGO, I WAS INVITED TO A SENATE HEARing called to look into the censorship of a documentary on the US military bases in the Philippines. The MTRCB did not agree with our treatment of the atrocities committed during the Filipino-American War because they learned history before the age of Agoncillo and Constantino. They argued that the horrors of that war did not exist, and if they did exist at all, then these were best left in the proverbial dustbin of history.

I remembered that Senate hearing while reading e-mailed reactions to last Wednesday's column on the atrocities committed by the Japanese in the Philippines during the last war. All agreed that the text I excerpted from the War Crimes Trials was very distressing, but one reader asked what was the point of this historical exercise. Did I have to fan anti-Japanese sentiment today when the war was 60 years away? Was the column a way to seek apology, retribution or compensation from Japan? Another reader reacted differently from the rest by objecting to my inclusion of Americans on the list of victims. This reader felt no sympathy for Americans because of the atrocities they committed in Mindanao, particularly in Bud Dajo where Filipinos, mostly unarmed noncombatants, including the aged, the infirm, women and children were massacred. Bud Dajo is not in our history books.

I always tell my students that history is like a mirror where you see yourself in the context of the past. The atrocities committed by the Japanese in the last war have no equal in our history. By comparison, the Germans did their extermination in a huge and systematic way, but the Japanese explored extensive varieties of pain that boggle the imagination. Some acts were so horrendous that people who live in peace six decades later doubt that such acts could have been committed at all. Take for example the last line in this excerpt from the Yamashita indictment:

"During the period from 7 February 1945 to 14 February 1945, both dates inclusive, at and in the vicinity of De La Salle College, 1501 Taft Avenue, Manila, brutally killing, without cause or trial, Judge R. Carlos and Brother Xavier, Rector of that college; both of whom were unarmed and noncombatant civilians; brutally killing, without cause or trial, 40 men, women, and children, all unarmed noncombatant civilians; brutally mistreating, wounding, maiming and attempting to kill, without cause or trial, fourteen (14) unarmed noncombatant civilians; attempted rape of one female civilian; and attempt to have carnal intercourse with the body of one dead female civilian."

What can be more gruesome than attempted necrophilia? A member of the National Historical Institute Board said that the above account was not so much about sex with a corpse, but rather the mad search for jewelry that some Filipino women hid in their private parts. Either way, the desecration of that corpse whether for sex or loot is so sick it is beyond our comprehension.

Comparing the material in the Yamashita and Homma indictment papers with the material more graphically presented in the War Crimes Trials excerpted last Wednesday made me appreciate the restraint used in preparing these documents. While we need not fan flames of hate today, we should not forget. Before we forgive, we must first learn of these things, but up till now these are not in our history textbooks. What I know of the Death March I have seen in B-rated films, but nothing can compare with the descriptions of torture and death in the indictment of General Homma. Some excerpts:

"During the months of May, June and July 1942 at Camps 1, 2, and 3, Cabanatuan, the systematic, cruel, barbarous and uncivilized treatment of American prisoners of war by willfully and deliberately failing and refusing to furnish proper toilet facilities and other sanitations, proper shelter and hospital facilities, sufficient food, antitoxin for diphtheria, epidemic and other medicines, adequate and uncontaminated drinking water; by willfully and deliberately forcing American prisoners of war to clean Japanese latrines with their bare hands and to place excreta into 55 gal. drums which they had to carry about one mile to a farm where they were required to spread it by hand over a garden; by generally mistreating and torturing and executing numerous American and Filipino prisoners of war for minor infractions. By reason of the above atrocities during the period 1 June 1943 and 15 August 1942, the deaths of approximately 1,463 American prisoners are recorded. [Imagine how many Filipino deaths went unrecorded.]

"On or about 9 January 1942, at Lubao, Pampanga, torturing a group of Filipino prisoners of war by kicking, sticking in the face with bamboo poles, refusing to allow them to drink water placed before them; without cause or trial, brutally killing one prisoner by splitting his skull with a ballpin hammer and shooting and killing two other prisoners. On or about 16 February 1942, at Palo, Leyte, savagely torturing two Filipino male civilians by hanging them by their hands, beating their nude bodies with thorn branches, and lighting gasoline which had been poured under their arms and on their genitals."

Reading all these made me realize for the first time what the word "inhuman" truly means.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

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Can't we do something to avoid tragedies caused by typhoons?

IT DOESN'T TAKE A GENIUS TO know that at least once a year, we will be hit by a tropical storm so strong it's going to cause disasters and power outages in various places around the country.

Take Bicol, for example. In 1988, the region was hit by a storm that was so forceful the whole area went without electricity for months. In 1993, Typhoon Sisang hit Bicol and the region had no power for two weeks. After Milenyo, Bicol might spend another Christmas in darkness. The reason for all these? Toppled power lines. Were these fixed in the past? Yes. Was something done to prevent similar episodes from happening? No.

So each time a powerful typhoon blows across our region, my fellow Bicolanos hear the same old refrains: "Be patient; don't complain; everyone else doesn't have electricity; you're better off, because at least you have a roof over your head; prayer and national solidarity will get us through this crisis."

Give me a break.

Patience, they say, is a virtue. In our case, however, it is a virtue that has been abused, time and again, by idiots who claim to be the best leaders we can have. Natural calamities have become so commonplace in this country you'd think by now we'd know what to do to cushion their impact.

When will enough be enough? How many people have to die, how many Filipinos have to lose their homes, how many floods do we have to put up with, how many "power-less" days must we live through before something is really done to prevent these from happening?

"An ounce of prevention," the saying goes, "is worth a pound of cure." It's a lesson that our leaders, apparently, have yet to learn.

—JED M. EVA III,
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With retake order, GMA addressed wrong issue

JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT EVerything was all right, the President gives in to her spin doctors and announces a retake.

Dante Ang, who argued for a retake and pressured other Cabinet members to accede to his position by using the National Council Licensure Examinations (not being held in the Philippines), thinks that everyone who took the exam would go to the United States and live the life of plenty. He never thought that not all of them are destined to go and work there and some of them will stay behind and serve here, or go to countries other than America.

As for the University of Santo Tomas, its nursing faculty members probably think their students are the only ones who were given brains by God and who have the right to become nurses. The UST nursing faculty should wake up. They shouldn't be sour grapes just because their cum laude did not make it. There are students who are as bright or even brighter than their students. For sure, the UST nursing graduates who passed the June 2006 nursing board exam do not like the high-handed moral stand the faculty members have taken.

Those examinees must now be grumbling against their faculty's over-zealousness—for they themselves do not want a retake. UST moved heaven and earth and apparently succeeded. To hell with the innocent, they are the collateral damage. What a devil-may-care attitude from a school that professes the teachings of Christ.

And what about us who passed but were not at all involved in the cheating? The government says it will take care of the test fees. What about the miscellaneous expenses for, say, refresher reviews which entail the bigger costs? Will the government pay for them, too?

Or will UST and Ang shell out from their own pockets and put their money where their mouths are? We're not discounting the examinees' and their parents' anxiety, stress and sleepless nights that cannot be monetarily measured. If they do so, then, maybe—just maybe—we exam passers might yet agree to a retake.

Nursing board passers, arise and be counted. Let your voices be heard—now! Organize! At least do something! Do not take this lying down. Maybe, we can still do something to claim what is morally ours.

The President addressed the wrong issue. The ones responsible for all these problems are scot-free. They are back supervising their review classes and collecting money from students. They're the ones the President's men should run after, not us. We did nothing wrong.

—ANTONIO MARQUEZ,
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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

LETTERS

Propaganda journalism?

THIS IS A REACTION TO INQUIRER's Sept. 28 editorial which raised concerns about how human life seems to have become so cheap in present-day Philippines.

Many years ago, a 19-year-old kid was shot dead by a police officer who lived in his neighborhood. There was no apparent reason for the shooting. Today, the police officer still lives in the neighborhood and so does the family of the victim. I don't remember that the killer went to jail for shooting the kid, but I remember vaguely seeing him around long after the incident.

Years later, someone told me what the shooting was all about. The victim was sleeping with the killer's wife, and I guess it explained the lack of reaction from the entire barangay. All the while, I've been wondering how primitive Filipinos could be, letting a murderer get away.

The shooting of the mentally challenged 12-year-old should not be used as a propaganda tool to get at Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan and, eventually, President Macapagal-Arroyo. I'm just as scared as any Left-leaning democrat in this country about fascist-minded military men. However, the incident the INQUIRER recounted in its editorial needs in-depth journalism, not propaganda journalism. The INQUIRER should get someone to interview the shooter. What's the guy's problem? What was his psychological make-up that could have led to the shooting? Did his elders treat him cruelly when he was growing up? How could he have treated a fellow human being like an insect?

Your simplistic viewpoint towards that incident is making me paranoid. If that 60-year-old man is to be considered a typical Filipino of his generation and background, then I might as well do a Jim Paredes. Either that, or go to war against the *pranings* (homicidal) of our culture.

—BRIAN BROTARLO,
brian.brotarlo@lycos.com

NEA should be abolished

IN LIGHT OF THE ONGOING DEliberations on Senate Bills 215, 881, 899, 1299 and 1300 and House Bill 4802 which seek to amend the Cooperative Code of the Philippines, we would like to call attention to the true status of the 114 electric cooperatives (ECs) as a "cooperative."

These cooperatives are still under the effective control and supervision of the National Electrification Administration by force of Presidential Decree 269 (as amended by PD 1645) which created the NEA in 1973 and mandated it to implement the rural electrification program all over the country. The NEA's deadline for this task was 1987, or nearly 20 years ago. There is no question that the NEA has failed to meet the deadline.

Section 57 of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira) clearly provides that the ECs should be given the option to either register as a stock cooperative under the Cooperative Code of the Philippines or as a stock corporation under the Corporation Code.

However, the NEA and the ECs' management insist that there is a third conversion option and that is the NEA. This has caused some confusion among the ECs' member-owners, especially because they have not been provided a forum where they can discuss this issue of registration with the NEA and the ECs' management.

But this is not something new. The Cooperative Code gave the NEA and the Cooperative Development Authority three years—from 1990 (the year RA 6938 was enacted)—to produce the Omnibus Rules and Regulations for the Registration of ECs (ORREC). But the NEA, which took advantage of the trust of the board of administrators of the newly created CDA, crafted one in such a way that no EC would be able to register with the CDA.

In this the NEA was so successful that 15 years after the promulgation of RA 6938, not a single EC has been registered with the CDA despite a very clear provision under Article 122 of the Cooperative Code which says: "Electric Cooperatives shall be under this Code." This gross disrespect of the law deprives 6 million EC member-owners of their right as true owners of their respective ECs.

And so came the Epira in 2001. It is but appropriate that the NEA and the ECs be neutral in the conduct of a referendum on the registration of ECs. But to date, with the NEA and Philreca's strong representation in Congress, not a single EC is complying in accordance with the implementing guidelines on the options for the registration of ECs. We are almost certain that the NEA and all these ECs will exhaust all means to keep the status quo which has kept the rural electrification program wrapped and stalled in unabated corruption.

History is deliberately allowed to repeat itself. We have no choice but to reiterate our call for the immediate abolition of the NEA.

—PETE L. ILAGAN,
president, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms Inc. (Nasecore),
nasecore2003@yahoo.com

Corrections to errors in ad

THIS IS WITH REGARD TO AN advertisement published in the INQUIRER's Sept. 10 issue.

The names of some of the 2006 Epilepsy Exemplar Awardees were misspelled.

1. Ms Natacia Rimorin
2. Ms Sonnyliz Valencia

Also, epilepsy was referred to as a "disease." In the Webster's Dictionary, a "disease" is defined as "a disordered or abnormal condition of an organ or other part of living organism." A "disorder" is defined as "a disturbance in the natural functions of, as body or mind." For information purposes, "epilepsy" is defined as a "neurological disorder." The disorder is not cured but is treatable. Most of the time it can be controlled through medicine.

The logo of the Epilepsy Awareness and Advocacy Inc. (EAAI) was used. The event for which the ad was published, was organized by the Philippine League Against Epilepsy Inc. (PLAE).

—JEANNE DESIREE DUMLAO-KHONGHUN

ANNOUNCEMENT

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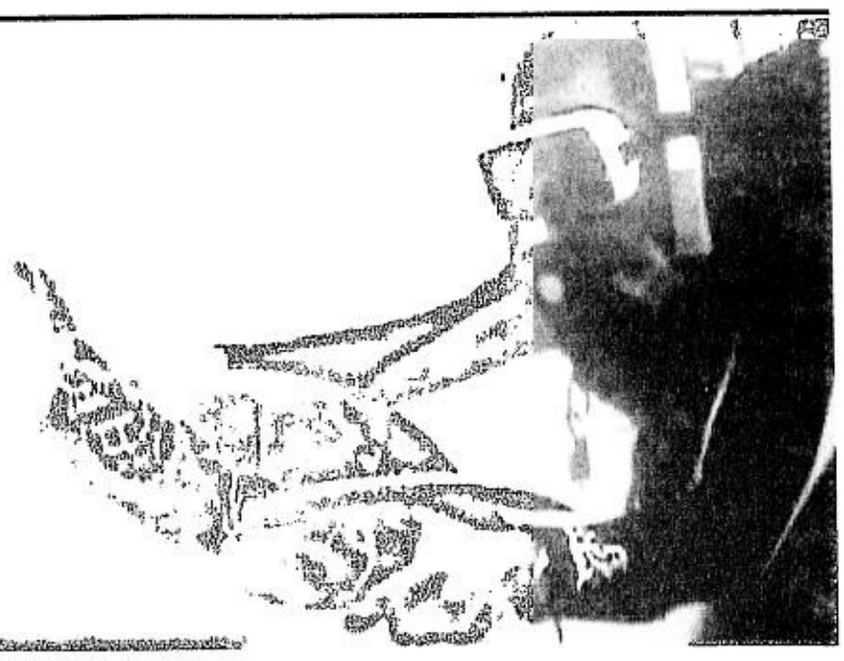
INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Endangered sea turtles find refuge in Pagudpud



A VOLUNTEER diver helps release a hawksbill turtle in the waters off Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte.
WILNORIE RASAY/CONTRIBUTOR

By Cristina Arzadon
Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte

FISHERFOLK IN THE NORTHernmost town of Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte believe that catching a sea turtle brings bad luck that must be neutralized by an *atang* (food offering).

Bella Abdun had this in mind when she and a group of fishermen in Barangay Baruyen discovered that their fishnet accidentally trapped two hawksbill turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) in the Pagudpud Bay last week.

Instead of butchering the creatures, Abdun immediately alerted village officials of their catch.

"We made an offering several times because we were told that once sea turtles find their way to our fishnets, no more catch will follow," she said.

Abdun would later realize that sea turtle preservation is a worldwide effort because of its dwindling population caused by various threats.

Humans butcher hawksbill turtles because they find their shells very attractive. The shells can be turned into cabinets, door posts and hand mirror frames. In Japan, for example, trading of *bekko* (Japanese word for hawksbill shell) is said to be rampant.

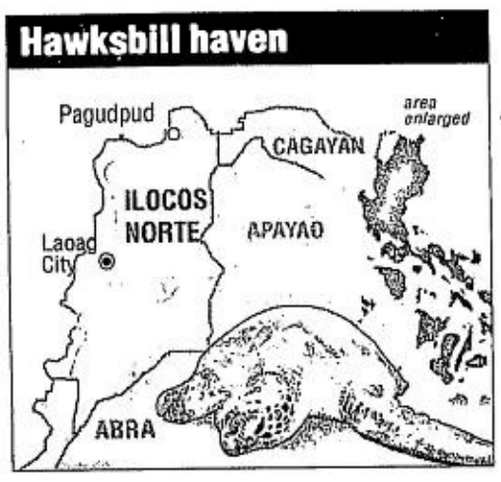
Turtle eggs are also sought because they are supposed to be superior to chicken eggs.

The hawksbill turtle is listed as an endangered species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. A website on sea turtle conservation said severe declines were noted in the western Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean.

Despite protective legislation, international trade in hawksbill shells and subsistence use of meat and eggs continue in many countries and pose a significant threat to the survival of the species.

The turtles were temporarily tied along the shallow waters off Pagudpud beach and alternately monitored by village folks for three days before they were released on Sept. 29.

Hawksbill haven



Coastal cleanup

The return of the endangered creatures to the sea coincided with the International Coastal Cleanup Day on Sept. 29.

The activity was a collaborative effort among town residents led by Mayor Marlon Sales, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the provincial agricultural office, the college of arts and sciences of the Mariano Marcos State University, and other volunteer divers.

Sales led a team of scuba divers who scoured underwater debris along Saud Beach, a popular resort in Pagudpud.

Arthur Valente of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources said the turtles, both females, could have been looking for a place to nest along the beach when they were captured.

"They had minor bruises on their flippers probably due to their being tied. They were a little weak from stress, but they were in good condition when they were released," Valente said.

The bigger turtle was described as 60-70 years old, 21 inches long and 14 inches wide, while the other was 25-30 years old, 14 inches long, and nine inches wide.

Wilnorie Rasay, a marine biology professor of the MMSU, said the sea turtles were probably transitory and were visiting coastal areas where the coral reef system is in good condition.

"They feed on seagrass and jellyfish. Their presence is an indication that the marine resource in Pagudpud is in good condition," he said.

Rasay, who is also a coordinator of the MMSU's coastal resource management extension program, said sea turtles had also been seen in the coastal towns of Badoc, Currimao and Pasuquin. The towns are covered by the university program.

A website (www.turtles.org) on sea turtles said hawksbills will nest on small pocket beaches and, because of their small body size and agility, can cross fringing reefs that limit access by other species.

Nesting behavior

Their nesting behavior follows a general sequence of that of other species of sea turtles: Emergence from the sea; site selection and clearing; pit construction; egg chamber construction; egg laying; filling in the egg chamber; disguising the nest site; and returning to sea. The entire process takes one to three hours.

Hawksbill turtles indicate strong attachment to specific nesting beach areas and will return to the same areas season after season, Valente said.

He said the frequent sighting of sea turtles on the shores of Ilocos Norte called for the identification of a sea turtle sanctuary to ensure their growth and protection. There had been reports of sea turtles being caught on previous occasions but their capture was not documented, he said.

Looking at history through fresh eyes

By Elizabeth Lolarga
Contributor

AMBETH OCAMPO'S NAME HAS BECOME synonymous with popularizing history, no doubt with help from his over a dozen best-selling books and his column in the INQUIRER.

In what is the first phase of publisher Anvil Publishing Inc.'s program to bring popular authors to campuses to encourage reading, Ocampo, chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the National Historical Institute, chucked off his formal historian's robes at the University of the Philippines Baguio to delight the standing-room-only crowd with little-known facts about the country's heroes.

This Metrobank outstanding teacher for 2006 revealed that Jose Rizal measured 5'2" at the time of his execution based on the estimation of the size of his clothes. His waist measured a slim 24 inches.

There exist photos of him from age 7 to the time he was killed, but just the same he is often depicted with parted hair, holding a quill and two books (the Noli and the Fili), wearing a black overcoat, black pair of pants, black shoes, and a black hat.

Ocampo finds this depiction of Rizal exasperating because the hero looks like Moses holding the tablets of the 10 Commandments. In fact, among the Rizalistas, a religious sect, Rizal is believed to be holding the Old and New Testaments. The quill is also much too old an instrument. During the late 19th century, there were pens already.

It was also discovered, based on the measurements of Rizal's clothes, that he had "a perfect proportion," Ocampo said, with a V shape at his back. This proved Rizal, a short man, lifted weights bigger than himself to develop himself.

As for Andres Bonifacio, "we hardly know what he looks like," Ocampo said, although his physical type is believed to be macho, clothed in a red scarf, white *camisa chino* and red *kundiman* pants.

Sitting duck

The historian said that in these colors at the height of the revolution, Bonifacio would have been a sitting duck. The more commonsensical view is that Bonifacio wore clothes that blended with the wooded area in Diliman where he went into hiding.

The bolo Bonifacio is often depicted carrying would have been useful in hand-to-hand combat, Ocampo said, so "most probably he used a gun that carried six bullets. When the bullets were used up, he would run, and that was how he survived. The bolo was practically never used. It was more symbolic than real."

Ocampo found the only photograph of Bonifacio and planned on disseminating it but first asked the opinion of essayist-historian Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil.

When she saw how homely and tubercular-looking the hero was, she decided against publishing the photo and keeping it instead for it would radically change people's perception of the courageous Bonifacio.

Ocampo believes that "the more useless information you have, the more well-rounded you are" as though referring to his fascination for historical trivia.

He added: "History is interesting. It teaches you many things like critical thinking, asking questions and pushing the parameters of knowledge. You look at a mirror and see yourself."

He is often heard saying that he was born 100 years too late because he wants to interview Rizal's contemporaries. He said, "The past is more interesting than the present and the future could ever be because of its mystery."

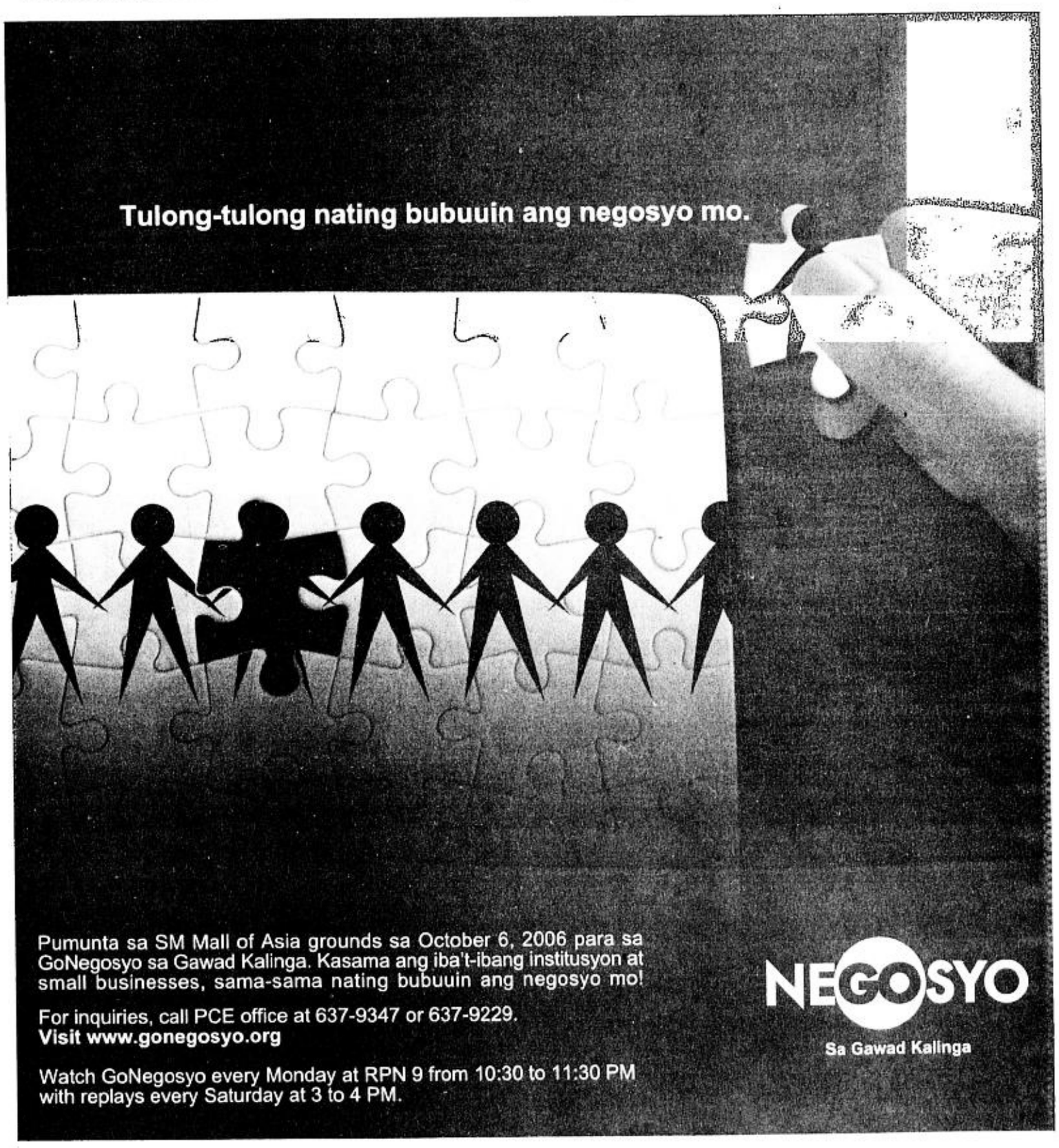
His challenge is to make history relevant, readable and even entertaining. Ocampo recalled that he began writing at the tailend of the Marcos years, and the safest thing for him to write about was history.

"If people find me entertaining, it just means the others have not done their job," he said. "My main work is to do a lot of research. I'm like a rat ransacking through manuscripts, retrieving things from the past."

One of his latest discoveries is the group of Cordillerans brought to Ghent, Belgium, for exhibition at a fair. When the manager had made money, he ran off with the loot and left the group stranded. A girl was born to one of the women and was named Flandria.

A Kankaney named Tamacheg or Tamatseg died of cold and depression. The Belgian government now wants to name a street for him in commemoration of the highlanders who were left in their country.

Ocampo, in his capacity as NHI chair, has been invited to the opening of the street, but he said he still wanted to find any descendants of Tamacheg to go with him.



NEGOSYO
Sa Gawad Kalinga

06 October 2006 PROGRAM
SM MALL OF ASIA GROUNDS
9:15 a.m.
FORUM 1: Ang Kagalingan ng PagNenegosyo: (The Value of Entrepreneurship)
Speakers: Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan*, Sec. Arthur Yap (PMS), Tony Meloto & Frank Padilla (Gawad Kalinga), Atty. Felipe Gozon (GMA Network, Inc), Butch Campos (Nutri Asia), Dr. Roland Hortaleza (Splash Corp.), Henry Lim Bon Liong (Sterling Paper Group of Co.) and other Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship (PCE) Trustees and Partners
Moderator: Connie Sison & Anthony Pangilinan
10: 40 a.m.
Entertainment: Ariel & Maverick

10:50 a.m.
FORUM 2: Masaganang Produksyon: Katapat ay Nutrisyon at Pangkabuhayan: (GK Communities as Agri-Producers: The Agri-Franchising Model)
Speakers: Toto Barcelona (Harbest), Lyndon Tan* (Basic Necessities – Vegetable producer, exporter), Anthony Inocencio* (AP Inocencio Farms – Chicken), Danilo Fausto (DVF Dairy Farms), Dizon Farms, Arturo Sanviclores* (United Rubber Planters and Processors Assoc.), Gerry Geronimo* (Ating Alamin), Jose Concepcion, Jr.* (RFM-Swift)
Moderator: Karen Davila*
12:10 a.m.
Entertainment: Leo Martinez
12:35 p.m.
Lunchbreak

1:30 p.m.
FORUM 3: Talk it Over : Ating Pagusapan, Prosesong Pang-Asenso Processing: (Teaching communities how to earn and 'fish' for life) Speakers: Lorna Pimentel*, BFAR, (Fish processing), Joy Contrera*, BAI (Meat processing), Susan Lozano*, BPI (Fruits and Vegetables Processing), Director Ricardo Cachuela*, BPRE (Barangay Food Terminal Concept) , Bgy. Captain Jose A. Diaz*, Bgy. Philam, Q.C. (Composting)
Moderator: Cheryl Cosim*
2:50 p.m.
Entertainment: Ony Carcamo: Ventriloquist

3:00 p.m.
FORUM 4: Iba'i-Ibang Negosyong Babagay Sa 'Yo: (Various Business Models: Internet, Franchising, Micro Enterprises and Micro Financing)
Speakers: Butch Jimenez* (PLDT), Richie Cuna (President, AFFI), Ray Gapuz (R.A. Gapuz Review), Doyee Tumpalan* (First VitaPlus), Ed Jimenez* (Microfinance Council), Les Reyes* (Reyes HairCutters), JM Tanalgo* (BCI), Sandy Javier (Andoks), Lloyd Luna
Moderators: Mike Enriquez*
4:20 p.m.
Entertainment

4:30 p.m
FORUM 5: Sikat na, Negosyante pa! Grabe ang Kital : (Celebrity Entrepreneurs)
Speakers: Dr. Vicky Belo* (Belo Medical Group), Fanny Serrano* (The Bridal Shop), Joel Torre* (JT Manukan Grille), Arnel Ignacio* (Arneli's Creative Hair System), Janice and Gelli de Belen, Wilma Doesnt, Richard Merk, Regine Tolentino
Moderators: Butch Francisco* or Ricky Lo*
6:10 p.m.
Close: (Edru Abraham: Kontra Gapi)
Discussions on the how-to's and demonstration, success stories, innovations/processing technologies, industry situationer/profiling
**Not confirmed*

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6/42 Luzon/Vis-Min 2 7 11 12 17 22 ₱3,764,219.40

Exec says Lafayette withstood typhoon

OFFICIALS OF A MINING COMPANY THAT IS running tests on its facility in a village in Albay said the firm withstood a direct hit by typhoon Milenyo, saying it suffered damage in what the officials said were "noncritical areas."

"All critical areas of the project, from the dams to the processing plant, held up as per design," said Manny Agcaoili, president of Rapu Rapu Processing Inc., in a statement.

"Even if it rained longer and harder, our dams would have had more than enough space for the water and there would have been no need to release any amount at all."

The statement said parts of the facility that suffered damage were the mess hall, portions of the perimeter fence, communications equipment and high-voltage lines due to fallen electric posts.

"We prepared and are ready for worse. This is part of being in full compliance with DENR standards and conditions," Agcaoili said.

He said Milenyo was a "vindication for the company that has consistently declared it would transform itself into a benchmark of responsible mining in the country."

He said it also showed that the project's emergency procedures are adequate and would hold up under severe situations as designed.

"Our immediate task right now is to help the communities in Albay and Sorsogon that had been devastated by the typhoon. We will distribute relief goods and help rebuild these communities," he said.

'Milenyo' causes severe damage to mining facility

A TYPHOON THAT RIPPED ACROSS THE EASTERN and northern parts of the country late last week left key parts of the country's first mine developed by foreigners in decades severely damaged, but caused no environmental damage, Lafayette Mining Ltd. said yesterday from Sydney.

A spokeswoman for Australian-listed Lafayette, which is running the mine under a temporary operating order after two cyanide spills last year led to a temporary closure, said a waste tailings storage facility was among the pieces of equipment damaged by the storm.

"There was no environmental damage as a result of the storm," Kay Donehue said from the company's Melbourne headquarters.

The mine and ore processing facilities on the remote island 350 km southeast of Manila were shut down as the typhoon hit the region, knocking out power and communication lines with the main island of Luzon, Donehue said.

"We did not want to risk anything, certainly while the typhoon was going through," she said.

The typhoon damaged some buildings on the mine site and the water pumps at the tailings storage facilities, she said.

"We will be resuming operations by about Thursday," Donehue said.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources suspended operations for three months on July 20 last year, forcing Lafayette to conduct remedial environmental work or face permanent closure.

Before the suspension, Lafayette was forecast to generate revenues of $350 million a year from the production of 10,000 tons of copper in concentrate, 14,000 tons of zinc, 50,000 ounces of gold and 600,000 ounces of silver.

Total copper and zinc concentrate inventory as of Sept. 25 stood at 580 ton, Donehue said.

South Korea's LG Co International Ltd. and the South Korean government's resources investment arm Kores together hold 26 percent of Lafayette Philippines Inc. The rest is owned by the Australian company. Environmentalists have opposed a law that allows 100-percent foreign ownership of local mining projects, up from 40 percent previously.

Reuters

Typhoon helped disperse oil spill, says exec

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD—WHILE TYPHOON Milenyo wrought havoc in many areas in the country, it also helped in dispersing the oil seeping out of the sink site of the MT Solar 1 off the coast of Guimaras, Presidential Adviser for Western Visayas Rafael Coscolluela said yesterday.

MT Solar 1 was loaded with 2.1 million liters of Petron bunker oil when it sank on Aug. 11. Its oil spill damaged the coasts of Guimaras and Iloilo.

According to Coscolluela, five liters of fuel an hour still seep out of the sink site but the rough seas and heavy rains, just like dispersants sprayed by the Coast Guard, dispersed the slick and cleaned up some of the shorelines.

Coscolluela said he has yet to receive advise on the schedule of siphoning of the oil from the sunken vessel. Local government officials in Western Visayas have been calling for its removal before it spills onto their shorelines.

Glenn Rabonza, executive officer of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, in a letter to Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said the NDCC, in collaboration, with Task Force Guimaras has resolved to undertake an integrated, wholistic and participatory response to the MT Solar 1 oil spill.

"One of the priorities in the response plan is to fast-track the recovery of the remaining oil in the sunken vessel and ensure that measures shall be instituted toward averting further damage to the environment, marine resources, economy and well-being of the affected communities," he said.

Marañon, however, called for a specific timetable on the actual removal of the fuel.

He said he would write to the NDCC to ask for a more specific response.

PUPILS of the Paaralan ng Buhay ng Tando play near their tent classroom during recess time at the palm-fringed interior part of Tando, Nueva Valencia. The village of 204 households was one of the coastal villages hardest hit by the Petron oil spill last August 11 in southern Guimaras. HAZEL P. VILLA

Temporary water interruption in San Juan and Mandaluyong needed to upgrade facilities

Manila Water is currently upgrading its distribution lines and facilities to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. We regret that we will have to temporarily interrupt water supply in portions of San Juan and Mandaluyong City starting 10:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 4, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., October 5, due to the installation of a large valve along Mabini St. corner Wilson St. The following areas will be affected: West Greenhills and Little Baguio in San Juan and Addition Hills in Mandaluyong City.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

Manila Water **For the latest update, please call our Customer Call Center Hotline at 1627.**

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(PDI – Oct. 4, 2006)

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Survivors recall being swept to sea

SORSOGON CITY—HER FATHER NEVER thought the typhoon would be that strong so he, his wife and six children stayed in their house to look after their belongings.

Little did they realize that they would be right in the path of "Milenyo," which struck Sorsogon Thursday.

Recounting to the INQUIRER yesterday her family's ordeal, 12-year-old Roselyn Lagata said that after taking her four younger siblings to a nearby school, she, her mother Rosalinda, her father Ernesto, and her elder sister Len-len went back to their house at the city pier at 3:30 p.m.

As winds and rains battered their house, they decided to evacuate. But when her father opened the door, giant waves hurled all of them out to the sea.

Luckily, they found a floating wooden bed and clung to it, Roselyn said.

Shouting in the dark

Then, one by one, her sister and parents lost their grip on the bed, she said.

Roselyn said she held on to the bed for almost an hour until the waves swept her back to the shore. Hanging on to a post as darkness came, she cried for help.

On her third shout, she said, her sister answered back.

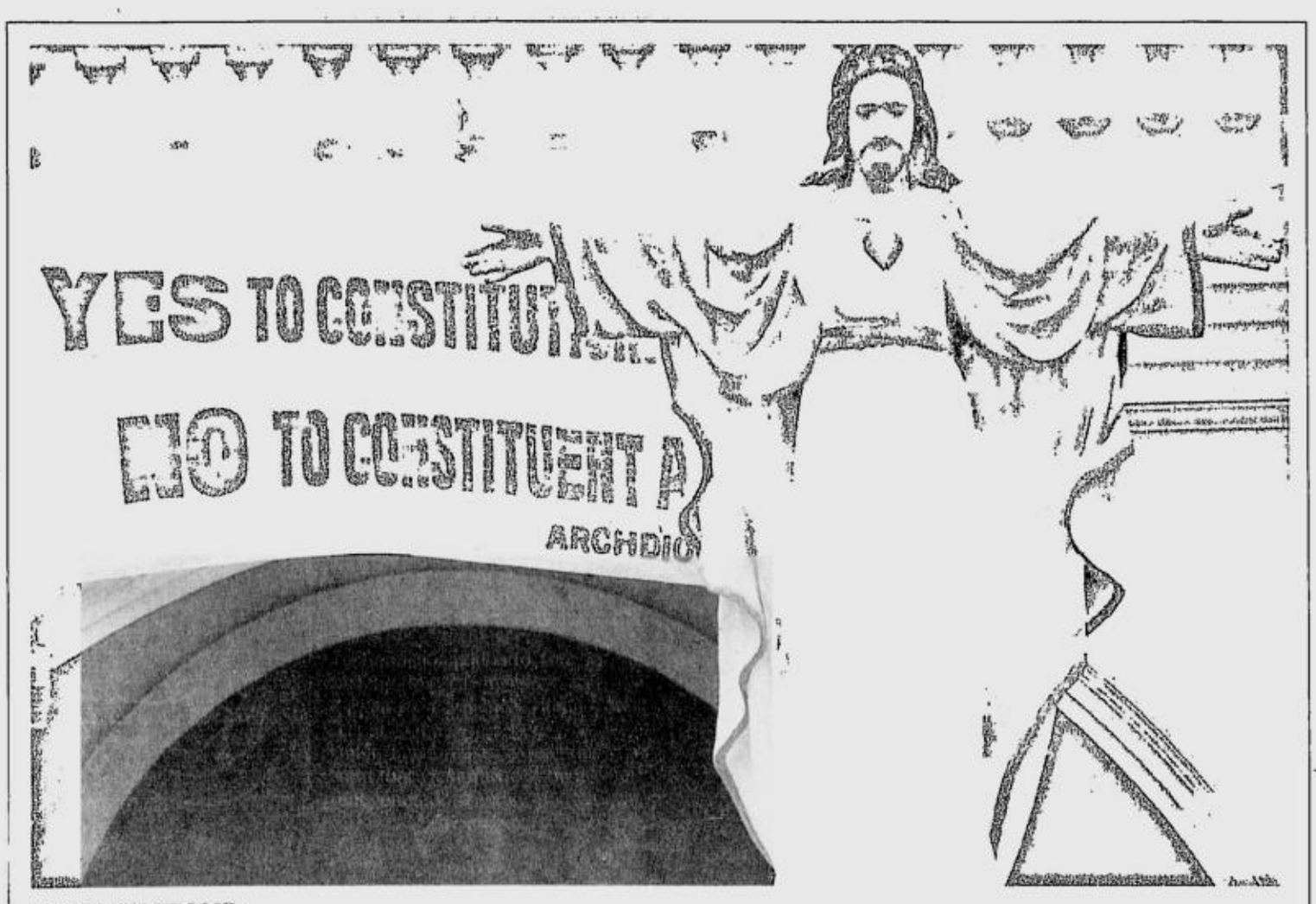
Len-len, it turned out, had been swept by the waves to the place where Roselyn was.

A village guard brought them to an evacuation center where they were reunited with their siblings.

At around 1 a.m., her mother was found in another barangay. At 8 a.m., her 64-year-old father was found in the same area.

Both were dead. They were among the 13 people in Sorsogon who perished in the typhoon.

Bobby Q. Labalan, Inquirer Southern Luzon



BISHOPS' STAND
A streamer at a church in Iloilo City expresses the sentiment of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines on the issue of Charter change. While the bishops agree to have the Constitution amended, they want it done not the way of people's initiative, but through what some said was a more democratic constitutional convention.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Army says NPA rebels stepping up attacks to collect 'taxes'

KIDAPAWAN CITY—THE MILITARY said communist guerrillas have increased attacks on targets that refuse to pay revolutionary taxes in Makilala, North Cotabato and this city.

The military said it reached this conclusion following a communist attack on a bus that was burned in Makilala town and a grenade scare on a mobile phone store in this city on the same day.

Col. Ruperto Pabustan, chief of the 602nd Infantry Brigade, said these attacks were an indication of what he said were the guerrillas frustration at the refusal of some businessmen to pay taxes to the underground movement.

The owners of the bus, the Weena Bus Co. and the unidentified businessman who owned the mobile phone store were reported to have refused to pay taxes to the guerrillas.

"They are extorting money from businessmen as part of their fundraising activity. Commercial establishments whose owners refuse to give in are being harassed and threatened through bombing and other violent means," Pabustan added.

Abelardo Gamilla, Weena Bus Co. operations chief, said armed men poured gasoline on one of their buses and set it on fire.

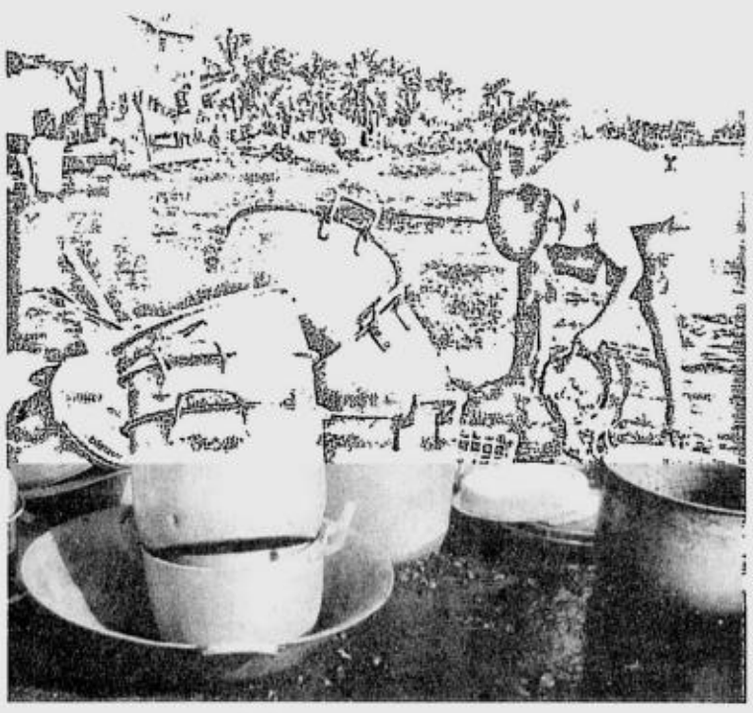
Weena, a firm owned and managed by the Valdevieso family of Matalam town, reportedly ceased giving "protection money" to the NPA following assurances by police and military authorities they would protect Weena against communist attacks.

Chief Insp. Leo Ojero, this city's acting police chief, said the unidentified man who hurled a grenade inside Best Communications Inc. (BCI), a cell phone distributor, could be an NPA rebel.

"This is their modus operandi. Every time big establishment owners refuse or completely stop providing financial support to the movement, they are either harassed by bomb threats or any other violent means," Pabustan said.

Nenelyn Pacete, BCI's officer-in-charge for sales, said a man had ordered her to open the store. When she declined because it was still too early in the morning, the man pulled out a live grenade from his pocket and rolled it inside the establishment. It failed to explode. *Charlie C. Señase, Inquirer Mindanao*

Typhoid cases add to 'Milenyo' woes



ELSEWHERE in the Bicol region, families who suffered losses from Typhoon "Milenyo" try to salvage whatever belongings they could save, like this man in Legazpi City who gathers pots and pans from his devastated home.
JOANNA LOS BAÑOS/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

VIRAC, CATANDUANES—HEALTH AUTHORITIES in this island province are closely monitoring suspected cases of typhoid fever, with over 50 sick patients admitted at the Eastern Bicol Medical Center (EBMC) and private hospitals in September alone.

The latest surveillance report submitted to Gov. Leandro B. Verceles Jr. by Provincial Health Officer II Wilfredo P. Santelices shows that 158 cases of suspected typhoid fever-stricken patients have been admitted in three hospitals since January this year.

As of Sept. 28, the EBMC-PHO accounted for 130, while the Bato Maternity and Children's Hospital and the Our Lady of Fatima Hospital in Panganiban town had three and 22 cases, respectively.

Only two of the 155 cases have resulted in deaths.

Increase in cases

The current typhoid scare started on Sept. 22 when the Provincial Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (Pesu) and the PHO Technical Service, headed by Dr. Rico P. Lareza, received a report on the increase in the admission of suspected typhoid fever cases at the EBMC.

Previously, the admission rate started to increase in April this year, with 13 cases compared to just three in the previous month.

Six rectal swab specimens submitted to the DOH-CHD regional laboratory, however, revealed negative culture for *Salmonella typhi*, the causative organism of typhoid fever.

The laboratory isolated E. coli organism from five of the specimens.

From 13 suspected cases in April, the number of cases increased to 18 in May. It was sustained until August with an average of 12 cases before jumping to 53 this September.

The clustering of cases was noted in Virac villages, with Danicop having the highest attack rate, followed by San Isidro Village, Calatagan, Bigaa, Tibgao, Sta. Elena and Calampong.

Specimens

Lareza told the INQUIRER that rectal swab specimens were sent to DOH-CHD last Friday after it was delayed by the recent typhoon.

It would take about a week before the results of the tests are released.

Typhoid fever is an acute, often severe illness caused by *Salmonella typhi* and is characterized by the onset of high fever, malaise, headache, constipation or diarrhea, and abdominal discomfort.

A major complication is intestinal hemorrhage or perforation.

Typhoid fever is a classic example of enteric fever, with an incubation period of one to three weeks and is usually transmitted through the ingestion of food and water contaminated with feces and urine of patients and carriers.

Pending the results of laboratory tests on the suspect typhoid specimens, the provincial government has started distributing flyers warning the public to avoid the spread of the infection and to practice strict personal hygiene.

The DOH regional office has also sent antibiotics to augment the stock at the EBMC. *Fernan Gianan, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Bid to observe Angelus in Baguio hits obstacle

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—A CRUSADE TO restore the observance of the Angelus in the city lost the fight on Monday when councilors rejected another resolution that orders pedestrian and vehicular traffic to stop for a minute every 6 p.m. to observe "a moment of silence and serenity."

The lobby was mounted by Baguio old-timers who are part of a government task force that is preparing the summer capital's centennial celebration in 2009.

The proposed measure, sponsored by Councilor Perlita Chan-Rondez, echoes similar resolutions filed in 1990 and 1999.

The only difference between Rondez's proposal and Resolution 337 of 1990 and Resolution 59 of 1999 is that it lengthens the moment of silence from 30 seconds to a minute.

Rondez said the centennial task force wanted to preserve this Baguio City practice, which was originally the local version of the Angelus.

The practice could also help ease tensions during rush hour, when tempers were high and where a minute's relaxation would prove to be useful, she said.

But like the 1990 and 1999 resolutions, Rondez's proposal also takes pains to remove religious connotations by deleting any reference to spirituality like "meditation."

The Angelus was originally a Catholic custom that began in the 11th century to celebrate the "incarnation" of Jesus Christ as God made flesh.

Philippine churches used to ring the Angelus bell at 6 a.m., noon and 6 p.m., although contemporary generations only remember the evening Angelus bell.

Some Catholic groups in the country continue observing the Angelus at noon when the faithful say a prayer, supposedly quoting the words Mary said to an angel that appeared before her to announce she was bearing Jesus, the son of God.

Textbooks indicate that the Spanish colonial government enforced a 6 p.m. Angelus to impose a curfew hour for native Filipinos in a bid to quell rebellion against Spanish colonization by keeping everyone indoors at that time and preventing secret gatherings where plots against the colonial government are often hatched.

Councilor Edilberto Tenefrancia, a long-time city resident, said the "moment of silence" some councilors wanted imposed would remain anchored to a religious custom that was practiced by a different generation.

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6 killed in Rizal flash floods

Strong rains affect residents in Antipolo, 4 towns

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IT RAINED HEAVILY FOR LESS THAN two hours on Monday night but it was enough to trigger flash floods in the mountainous province of Rizal which swept away shanties, caused a landslide, drowned key streets and left six persons, including an 80-year-old blind woman, dead.

The floods had already subsided yesterday morning, but only after displacing almost 1,200 residents from their homes in Antipolo City and the towns of Cainta, Teresa, Taytay and Angono.

Still reeling from the destruction wrought by Typhoon "Milenyo" days ago, residents in the province again started to worry as a heavy downpour fell on Monday afternoon.

Suddenly, residents near Sapang Buho creek in Barangay San Roque, Antipolo City noticed that it was rapidly swelling. Flood rushed down the surrounding hills minutes later.

Residents quickly fled as turbulent water swept away their shanties but 17-year-old Wendell dela Peña was dragged into the turbulent waters of the creek.

His body was recovered hours later in Sitio Sangkalan about 20 kilometers away from where he disappeared, Antipolo City disaster coordinator Elmer Quintos told the INQUIRER.

Three other fatalities were reported in Antipolo City. Four-year-old Fidel Pimentel drowned as floodwaters rose in Barangay San Jose, provincial assistant social welfare officer Monette Martin said.

MILLET Dire carries her dog to safety after floodwaters entered their house in Cainta, Rizal Monday night. Her family, however, failed to move their van to higher ground as the water rose quickly. LYN RILLON

A landslide, meanwhile, hit Barangay Dalig, crushing several houses. Falling concrete walls hit 58-year-old Agustin Macapanas, killing him instantly, police said. Isodoro Ironasa, 74, a resident of the same barangay, died of drowning.

The landslide also closed the national road going to Teresa, trapping motorists and passengers for hours.

A flood swept away houses near the foot of a hill in Sitio Pulang Lupa in Teresa, killing 80-year-old Corazon de Rojo.

Teresa police chief Insp. Aristone Dogwe said that De Rojo, who was blind, was trapped inside her house.

Edgardo del Mundo, 37, was also killed after he drowned in the flood.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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■ **QC cop charged** for letting prisoner escape /A20

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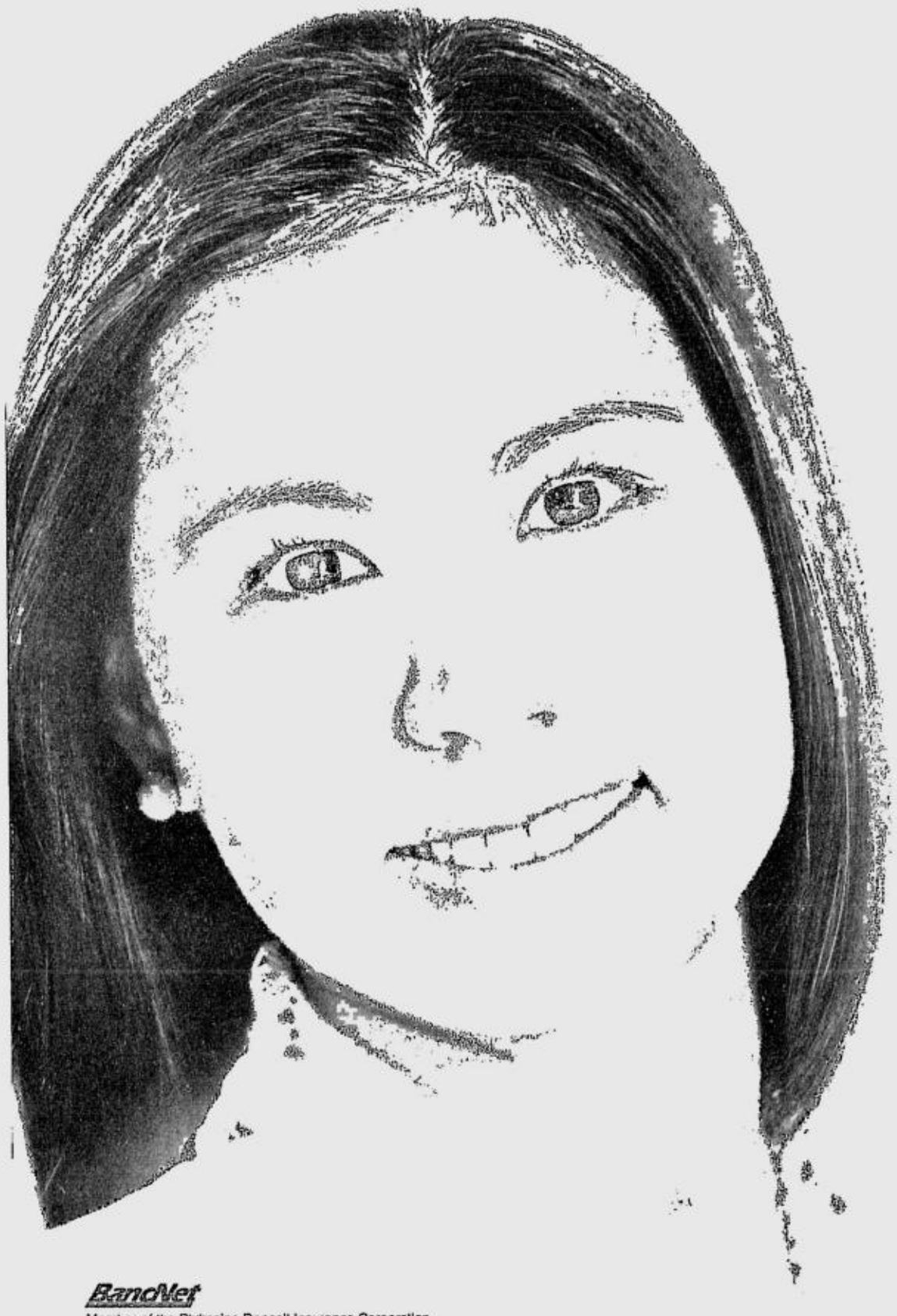

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Bundles of birth certificates lost as fire hits NSO building

By Margaux C. Ortiz

IMPORTANT PUBLIC DOCUMENTS, including bundles of birth certificates, went up in smoke as fire destroyed the fourth floor of the National Statistics Office building in Manila early yesterday morning.

SFO2 Wilson Tana of the Manila Fire Department estimated the damage to property and documents at around P1 million.

No one was reported hurt in the incident.

Tana said the fire razed two division offices of the NSO Annex 2 housed at the Soledad Building on De Dios Street, Sta. Mesa, Manila.

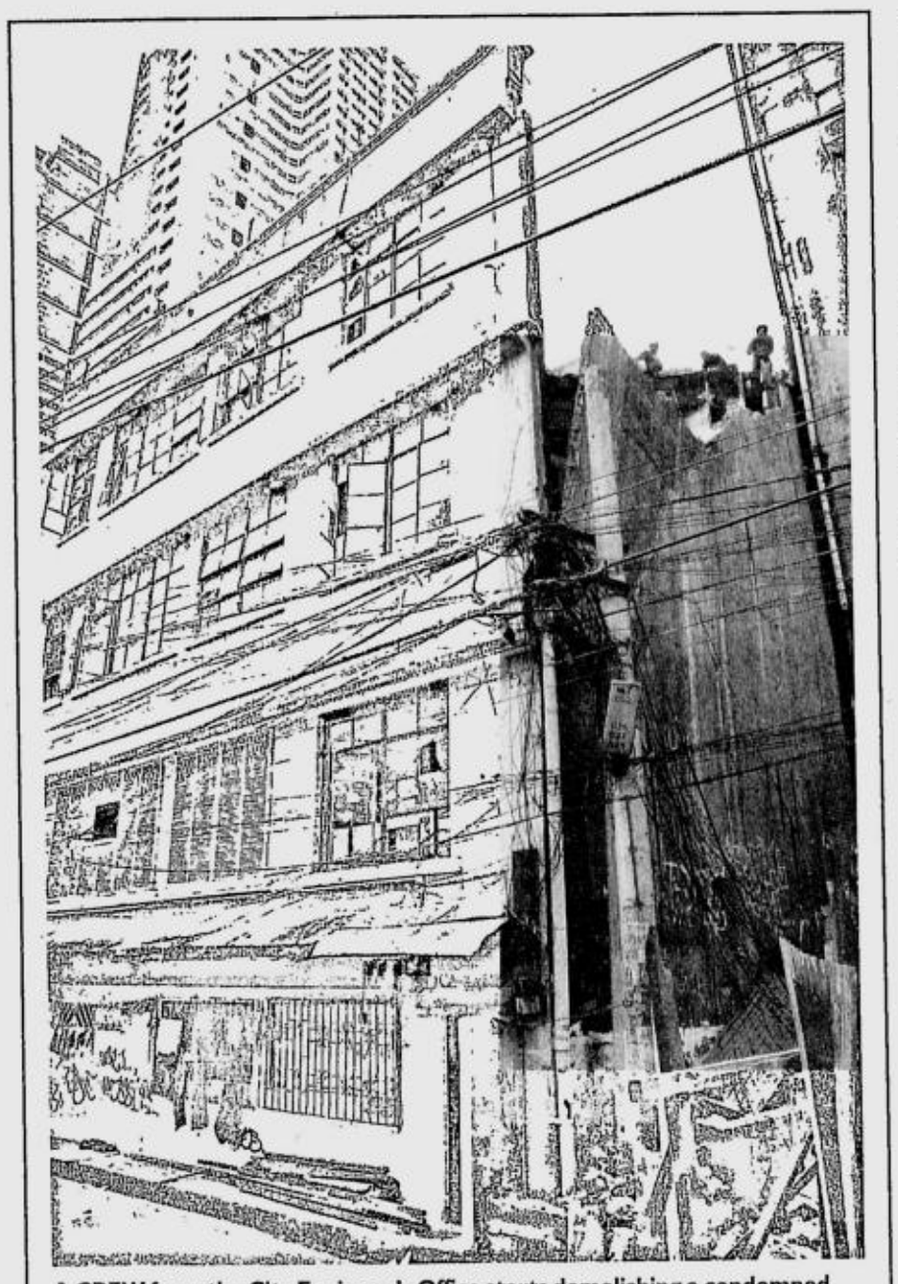
According to the fire official, the blaze began at 2:59 a.m. and reached the fifth alarm before it was put out at 4:57 a.m.

He added that the fire started in the middle of the fourth floor.

"The security guard on duty during that time heard a series of explosions before he noticed the blaze," Tana explained.

Investigation showed that the fire may have started when electricity was suddenly restored to the building after a brief brownout.

"The power lines in the area, which were damaged by the recent typhoon, were still being repaired during that time," Tana noted.



A CREW from the City Engineer's Office starts demolishing a condemned building at the corner of Guerrero and Arquiza Streets in Ermita, Manila, after one of its walls collapsed. Fortunately, no one was hurt. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Wall of old condemned building collapses

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE WALL OF AN OLD APARTMENT building in Ermita, Manila collapsed on Monday afternoon, prompting city engineers to speed up its demolition beginning yesterday.

The structure, located at the corner of Arquiza and Guerrero Streets, was built during the American colonial era.

Lloyd Titong of the Manila City Engineer's Office said the building was declared condemned on Sept. 4.

"It is extremely old, with its wooden beams and buckled walls," he said in an interview.

Titong added that the building was supposed to be demolished on Sept. 24, but several tenants, including former actress Odette Khan, had appealed to the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) not to push through with the demolition.

"However, when a wall of the building finally collapsed on Monday, the tenants were forced to abandon its premises," the engineer explained.

He said Khan and the other tenants had asked for three more days to vacate the apartment.

"After all the occupants leave, we will go full blast with the demolition operations to prevent it from affecting the other buildings in the area," Titong said.

The Office of the Building Official had earlier declared the building "dangerous" in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of the National Building Code.

MMDA: Submit 'Disenyo Milenyo' entries on Oct. 15

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE METROPOLITAN MANILA DEVELOPMENT Authority (MMDA) is keeping the contest rules simple for those who want to join "Disenyo Milenyo," which encourages people to turn trees felled by Typhoon "Milenyo" into works of art.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno yesterday set the rules for the art contest: It is open to anyone—whether as a team or individual effort—who can create something beautiful out of trees that Milenyo uprooted.

Individual or team-created entries must be brought to the People Power Monument in Quezon City on Oct. 15, the MMDA official said.

Free expression

"Basically it's free expression, what they can make out of wood coming from trees that have fallen. It's better to keep it that way. This is just to get people to think about what can be done with wood out of the fallen trees," Nacianceno said .

He added that the agency will not specify the type of artwork that can be entered in the competition. This can be a sculpture or even a piece of furniture, he said.

"This is to generate interest on the part of everyone to think about what they can do with wood ... anything you can make that would be nice," Nacianceno stated.

Not just for the prize

"The prize is not even that substantial yet. But it's not about the prize but about getting people on board in making something useful out of a material that would have just gone to the dump," he told the INQUIRER.

MMDA officials have yet to announce what the prizes will be.

Thousands of trees were uprooted all over the country when Milenyo tore through Luzon on Thursday. As soon as the storm left, the MMDA and local governments mobilized their clearing crew for the massive cleanup of Metro Manila, where trees had toppled onto major thoroughfares.

METROBRIEFS

Policeman charged

A POLICEMAN in charge of a detainee who escaped from the Quezon City Female Dormitory (QCFD) early this month is now facing legal trouble. Charged with infidelity in the custody of a prisoner was SPO1 Danilo Padlan of the Quezon City Police District Headquarters Support Unit. In a complaint filed in the Quezon City prosecutor's office yesterday, Padlan was accused of dereliction of duty following the escape of Mary Rose Umali, a detainee who was arrested on drug related charges. Insp. Edgardo Cervantes, officer in charge of the QCPD Custodial Office, said the respondent was among the police officers tasked to commit eight detainees either to the Quezon City Jail or to the QCFD on Sept. 1. But the next day, PO1 Julius Salcedo reported to his superiors that Padlan, who was supposed to be Umali's escort, was absent. Cervantes further learned that Umali had not been committed to the QCFD, after he checked with the detention center. Padlan later admitted to a policeman that Umali had escaped.

DJ Yap

Expo Manila postponed

THE COMPUTER Manufacturers, Distributors and Dealers Association of the Philippines (Comddap) has announced that Comddap Expo Manila 2006, set on Oct. 5-8 at Global City in Taguig City, has been postponed. Typhoon "Milenyo" damaged interior components, carpets and air-conditioning units, among other accessories to be used for the 3,000-square meter Comddap Tent, a custom-built venue for the biggest computer exposition and technology event in the country. Comddap president Juan Chua said the postponement would give suppliers time to replace imported accessories and other vital components to ensure the safety and security of some 40,000 visitors during the annual event. For inquiries, call Gina Dimayuga of the Comddap secretariat at 8103814 and 8927947 or e-mail ginavildim@comddap.org.

Manila councilor seeks ban on billboards

By Tina G. Santos

A MANILA COUNCILOR IS PUSHING FOR a resolution which will declare a moratorium on the construction and installation of billboards in the city.

Councilor Ma. Lourdes "Bonjay" Isip-Garcia, who authored the resolution, said the moratorium will be in effect until the city government drafts an ordinance setting guidelines for advertising firms who want to put up billboards in Manila.

"Some of these advertising signs and billboards have become sources of distraction for motorists, sometimes causing traffic and even road accidents," Garcia said.

Mayor Lito Atienza, who is against imposing a total ban on outdoor advertisements, had earlier said that the city government would just enforce a single standard for all billboards.

"We want to control the size, the height, as well as the fees which should be commensurate to the use of public space," he added, although he stressed that billboards should not be removed from streets or major thoroughfares.

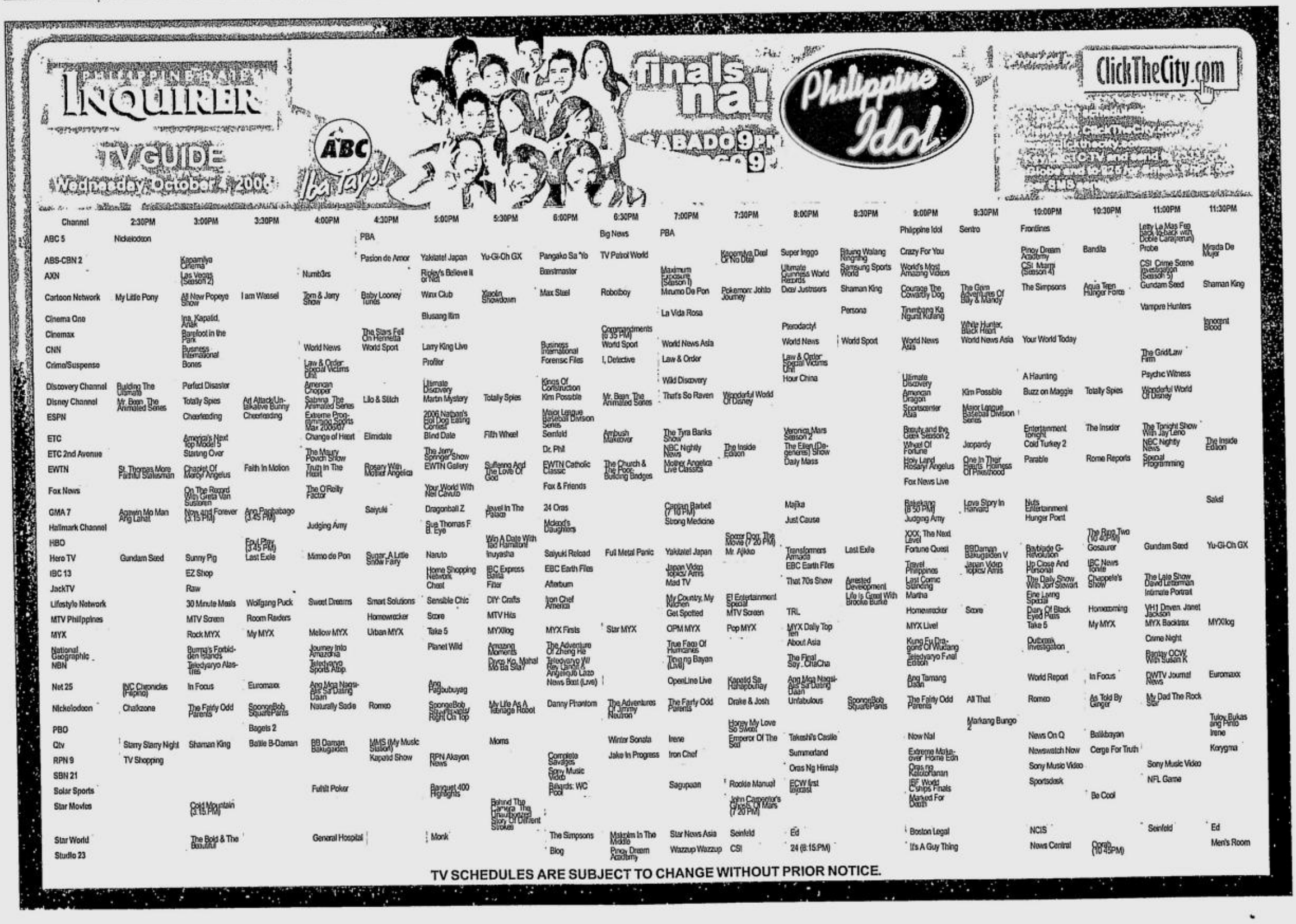
Atienza had earlier ordered city administrator Gaudencio Nable not to put back up billboards in the city that had been rolled up before Typhoon "Milenyo" struck the metropolis last week.

DID YOU KNOW

THE LATEST census shows that Metro Manila has a median age of 24 years. This means half of the 9.9 million people in the metropolis is below 24 years old.

Of the 9.9 million population, 1.09 million belong to the 20 to 24 age range, while 1.05 million persons are 5 to 9 years old. There are only 43,154 residents aged 80 and above.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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LONGEST FINGERNAILS. Lee Redmond of the US shows her fingernails which won her entry into the latest edition of Guinness World Records Sept. 28 for the world's longest fingernails. REUTERS

Russia cuts air, rail links to Georgia after spy furor

TBILISI—RUSSIA THREW UP A blockade against Georgia on Monday after Tbilisi's release of four Russian soldiers accused of spying failed to defuse the worst crisis in years between the ex-Soviet neighbors.

Western mediators urged Russia to step back from confrontation when Georgia released the soldiers in what it said was a goodwill gesture. But Moscow ignored those pleas and said it would cut rail, air and postal links with Georgia.

The soldiers' arrest was a flashpoint for deeper tensions.

Georgia is pushing aggressively to join NATO and the European Union. That alarms Russia, which sees the country as part of its sphere of influence.

"Naturally, (Georgia's actions) will not be without consequences. We are able to put pressure on the current Georgian regime across the board," Andrei Kokoshin, a senior pro-Kremlin politician, told Russia's Channel One television.

After days of increasingly shrill exchanges between Moscow and Tbilisi, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili said he had ordered that the four Russian soldiers be released from police custody and deported.

He said he wanted friendly relations with Moscow but would not allow it to bully Georgia—a state of five million people that for centuries was part of the Russian empire.

"The message to Russia is: 'Enough is enough'," Saakashvili, speaking in English, told a news conference.

The Russian restrictions could cause deep damage to Georgia's economy. Russia is a key trading partner and many Georgians survive on money sent home by relatives working in Russia.

Georgia's stand-off with Moscow has sent ripples beyond the region. US President George W. Bush talked to Russian leader Vladimir Putin about Georgia in a telephone conversation on Monday, the Kremlin press service said.

It said Putin underlined that third parties should be careful about encouraging Georgia—a sideswipe at US support for Georgia's pro-Western leadership which irks many in Moscow.

US Assistant Secretary of State Dan Fried urged Russia and Georgia to "lower the rhetoric" and offered Washington's help to resolve long-standing conflicts such as in Georgia's breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Speaking in Washington, Fried said he hoped both sides would try to reduce tensions following the release of the soldiers and he urged Russia to lift restrictions, which include a ban on imports of Georgian wine and bottled water.

"Hot rhetoric, sanctions, threats, all kinds of provocative behavior don't help," he said. *Reuters*

US Republicans grapple with sex scandal

WASHINGTON—HOUSE OF REPresentatives Republican leaders, already facing a tough election fight to keep control of the US Congress, struggled on Monday to contain a mushrooming sex scandal just five weeks before the Nov. 7 vote.

Former Republican Rep. Mark Foley, under FBI investigation for sending sexually explicit Internet messages to underage male congressional pages, reportedly checked into an alcohol rehabilitation facility over the weekend after resigning from Congress on Friday.

House Speaker Dennis Hastert of Illinois, responding to questions about what and when Republican leaders learned about the scandal, strongly denied knowing the explicit sexual nature of Foley's messages until they surfaced on Friday.

"No one in the Republican leadership … saw those messages until last Friday when ABC News released them to the public," Hastert told reporters at the Capitol.

Hastert and other top House Republicans said over the weekend they knew of e-mail traffic between Foley and a 16-year-old boy, which was described to them as "overfriendly," but were not made aware of the explicit nature of messages sent to other pages.

Some members of both parties suggested any congressional leader who knew about the content of the messages and failed to take action should step down.

"Congressman Foley duped a lot of people," Hastert said.

The scandal put Republicans on the defensive in the final month of a close election campaign, with Democrats looking to pick up the 15 House seats and six Senate seats needed to regain control of each chamber.

President George W. Bush and the White House tried to stay above the fray. "The House has to clean up the mess, to the extent there is a mess," White House spokesperson Tony Snow said.

Foley, a six-term veteran and chair of the House caucus on missing and exploited children, resigned after the sexually explicit messages to current and former congressional pages were made public. *Reuters*

BEAUTEOUS POLL BETS. Cynthia Viteri of Ecuador (left) and Ségolène Royal (right) of the French Socialist-Party are both running for president in their respective countries. REUTERS

'We'll get Bin Laden," says Bush

RENO—US PRESIdent George W. Bush said Monday it was only a "matter of time" until the elusive al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden faces justice.

"I'm just telling you we're dismantling al-Qaida one person at a time. We're on the hunt," Bush said at a congressional campaign event here.

"And it's just a matter of time before Osama bin Laden gets the justice he deserves," he said.

Bush spoke in Reno, Nevada, to support a Republican candidate running for Congress, weeks before the Nov. 7 elections and amid stepped-up criticism of the Iraq war following the release of an intelligence document saying the conflict helped recruit terrorists.

Democrats have seized on the report to contradict Bush's longstanding claim that the March 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq has made the world safer.

The US leader struck back at critics of the war, saying it was a "central front in the war on terror." "Success in Iraq will help make this country more secure. Failure in Iraq will mean that we will have left behind a treacherous world for children and our grandchildren," Bush said. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Iraq unveils new security plan

BAGHDAD—Faced with unrelenting sectarian killings and growing anger from Sunni Arab leaders, Prime Minister Nouri Kamal al-Maliki announced a new security plan on Monday that calls for committees of neighborhood leaders to try to defuse sectarian crises in their own areas and also for new supervision of the news media. But the details of the plan were vague, and it was not clear how effective it would be in the face of recent unsuccessful attempts, through both political and military initiatives, to quell the sectarian violence and growing militia dominance that have pushed the country to the verge of civil war. "We are doing this to end sectarianism in Iraq forever," said al-Maliki, a Shiite, as he announced the plan on television flanked by Sunni lawmakers.

New York Times News Service

Group threatens to kill Hamas leaders

GAZA—The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an armed wing of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah faction, threatened for the first time on Tuesday to kill Hamas leaders, including exiled political chief Khaled Meshaal. The threat marked an escalation in the power struggle between Fatah and the ruling Hamas movement after two days of internal fighting in the Gaza Strip and the occupied West Bank in which 12 Palestinians were killed and more than 100 wounded. In a statement sent to Reuters, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades said it held Meshaal, Palestinian Interior Minister Saeed Seyam and senior Interior Ministry official Youssef al-Zahar responsible for the deaths.

Reuters

Typhoon death toll rises in Vietnam

HANOI—The death toll in Vietnam from powerful Typhoon Xangsane rose to at least 42 on Tuesday, local and central officials said, warning it could increase further. The storm, which also claimed the lives of nearly 200 people in the Philippines, left 26 dead in the city of Danang alone, the national committee on flood and storm control said on its website. In neighboring Quang Nam province, "we received report of 12 deaths but the toll could be higher," said Nguyen Van Tien, deputy head of the provincial flood and storm control committee. Most of the 12 were swept away by floods, he said. Some 270 people were injured when the storm hit Vietnam on Sunday.

AFP

14 Nigerian soldiers killed in attack

LAGOS—Fourteen Nigerian soldiers were killed Monday by heavily-armed assailants as they escorted a Shell supply boat in the volatile oil-rich Niger Delta region, in the worst violence of its kind this year, according to several sources. The attackers were not immediately identified, and no one came forward Monday to claim responsibility. The sources said attackers aboard fast launches targetted a supply boat belonging to Shell oil in a coastal area of the Nigerian state of Bayelsa. The vessel was being escorted at the time by a team from Nigeria's Joint Task Force (JTF).

AFP

Gunman kills 4 students

NICKELMINES, PA.—A dairy truck driver, apparently nursing a 20-year-old grudge, walked into a one-room Amish schoolhouse here on Monday morning and systematically tried to execute the girls there, killing four and wounding seven. The gunman, identified as Charles C. Roberts, 32, killed himself as the police stormed the West Nickel Mines Amish School in Lancaster County, about 35 miles west of Philadelphia. Several of the wounded were in critical condition in area hospitals. "He wanted to find female victims," said Col. Jeffrey B. Miller, commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police. "This was a target of opportunity." Roberts had no criminal record or history of psychiatric illness, the authorities said.

New York Times News Service

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2006

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

S. Korea official likely to be voted UN leader

UNITED NATIONS—SOUTH KOREA'S FOREIGN Minister Ban Ki-Moon was virtually assured on Monday of succeeding Kofi Annan as UN secretary-general, emerging as the only candidate without a veto in a final informal Security Council poll.

The council was expected to hold an official vote on Oct. 9 for secretary-general, the eighth UN leader since 1946. The 192-member UN General Assembly must then approve the nomination, which it usually does.

"It is quite clear from today's straw poll that Minister Ban Ki-Moon is the candidate the Security Council will recommend to the General Assembly," China's UN ambassador Wang Guangya told reporters.

Although the poll was nonbinding, there was little chance another candidate would enter the running before Monday.

A candidate is required to get at least nine positive votes and no veto from the 15-member UN Security Council in the race to succeed Annan, who ends his 10-year term on Dec. 31.

Ban's closest rival, Shashi Tharoor of India, 50, a published writer and the UN undersecretary-general for public information, withdrew after receiving 10 votes in favor, three against, one of which was a veto, and two "no opinions." "It is clear that he will be our next secretary-general," Tharoor said of Ban, adding that he would "strongly support" Ban because "the United Nations and the world has a stake in his success."

The informal poll was the fourth held since July and the first to distinguish between permanent members and the other 10 nations, elected for two-year terms. Between the votes, diplomats said horse-trading was prevalent, especially among some major powers lobbying for key posts.

Council members marked ballots to "encourage, discourage or express no opinion" as in three previous informal polls. Each member could vote for more than one of the six candidates.

Ban, 62, received 14 votes in favor and one "no opinion" but no negative vote from any of five permanent members with veto power. The five—the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China—used blue-colored ballots, while the 10 rotating members used white ones.

BAN REUTERS

All the other candidates received five votes or less. In third place was Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga, the only woman and non-Asian in the race. She received five votes in favor, six against, including two vetoes, and four undecided.

US Ambassador John Bolton has been pushing for the process to be wrapped up as soon as possible.

"New candidates still have the option of coming forward, but we've been waiting for new candidates and I don't know of any, there's no speculation of any," he said. "I'd be surprised if new candidates came forward." Jayantha Dhanapala, 67, of Sri Lanka, a former UN undersecretary-general for disarmament, pulled out of the race after receiving only three positive votes in Thursday's straw poll.

In late 1996, Annan, a Ghanaian emerged after the United States blocked a second term for Egypt's Boutros Boutros-Ghali.

France vetoed Annan several times but apparently compromised after it realized the United States would not back down. A Frenchman was then made head of UN peacekeeping.

Most council ambassadors agreed, especially at the insistence of China, that the next secretary-general should come from Asia because of a tradition that rotates the post among regions of the world. The last Asian secretary-general was Burma's U Thant, in office from 1961-71. *Reuters*

Ex-Thai PM Thaksin resigns as party chief

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S OUSTed premier Thaksin Shinawatra resigned Tuesday as leader of his party, threatening its survival amid intensifying graft investigations by the new military-backed government.

"I must resign because of the new environment," Thaksin said in a handwritten letter from exile in London read at a press conference by a top party official. "I have to do this to keep the party alive." Thaksin's letter came as scores of top members defected from the party this week, days after Thailand's political winds shifted when the junta carried out a bloodless coup that ousted Thaksin.

"I would like to thank everyone, including the party committee and all the staff for building our party and making it strong enough to become a party for the people, with more than 14 million members who had confidence in us to form a government for two terms," the letter said.

Thaksin created Thai Rak Thai (TRT), or "Thais Love Thais," in 1998 and transformed it into a political machine that won widespread popularity, especially in mainly rural northern Thailand.

The billionaire tycoon built the party with his personal fortune and charisma, finding an unlikely following among the rural poor, especially in northern Thailand where he was born.

PONGTHEP Thepkanchana, right, deputy leader of Thai Rak Thai party, shows the resignation letter of ousted Premier and party leader Thaksin Shinwatra at a news conference in Bangkok, Oct. 3. AP

His party was the first to lavish attention and resources on poor Thai farmers, whose incomes rose dramatically during his five years in office.

At the height of its popularity after elections in 2005, TRT held 375 of the 500 seats in parliament. But analysts have long doubted whether the party could survive without Thaksin's leadership—and his pocketbook. *AFP*

Airplane recorders recovered

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil—Rescue workers on Monday found cockpit voice and data recorders in the wreckage of an airliner that crashed in the Amazon rainforest last week, killing all 155 people on board.

Investigators continued questioning the American pilots of a business jet that Brazilian authorities say they believe collided with the larger aircraft in midair. A senior executive of ExcelAire Service Inc., a New York-based aircraft charter and management company that had purchased the smaller jet in Brazil and was bringing it back to the United States, was also being questioned.

In aerial surveys of the crash site, in dense thicket in the central Brazilian state of Mato Grosso, salvage crews spotted the tail section of the Boeing 737-800 in which the recorders were found. Until now, the probe into the crash has focused on cockpit data from the smaller aircraft, an Embraer Legacy 600 executive jet, and on the statements of its pilots and passengers, who landed safely on a remote military landing strip a half-hour after they felt a jolt.

By late Monday, the authorities had managed to recover the remains of only a few victims. With debris and the remains of passengers scattered in a diameter that could extend dozens of miles, investigators said they feared that the bodies of many victims might never be recovered.

"The scene is much more difficult than any of us ever could have imagined," Brig. Jorge Kersul, an Air Force commander directing salvage operations, told reporters near the crash site on Monday. *NYT*

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Tigers' triumph a showcase of faith/A24

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

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■ Prize-money delay does not faze Bata/A26

Giants test Phone Pals

Aces hope to bounce back, take on Tigers

By Musong R. Castillo

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:40 p.m.–Coca-Cola vs. Alaska
7:20 p.m.–Purefoods vs. Talk 'N Text

RYAN GREGORIO LIKES WHERE HIS TEAM is at the moment–practically overlooked and not getting much attention during the preseason hype for the PBA Philippine Cup.

"Just like in the last tournament, very few actually talked about us," Gregorio said, a few days before his Purefoods Chunkee Giants were to open defense of the title they won over Red Bull just a few months back.

"It somehow relieves us of the pressure, making us play better," he added.

Tonight, the Giants will test one of the teams that did get a lot of that hype, the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals, whose souped-up roster will start a regular tournament together for the first time.

"I think I still have a team capable of competing and winning," Gregorio, winner of two league championships, said. "The nucleus is still there and the return to complete health of some of the players will definitely help us in the long grind."

Game time is set at 7:20 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, shortly after Alaska tries to

GIANTS/ A26

1996 MVP JOHNNY Abarrientos, starting a new chapter in his decorated career with Barangay Ginebra, goes to work against Froilan Baguion of league newcomer Welcoat. The Kings drubbed the Dragons, 102-69.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

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Jarencio has the last laugh

By Jasmine W. Payo

FOUR MONTHS AGO, THERE WERE many reasons that the Santo Tomas Growling Tigers wouldn't win the UAAP championship crown.

For one, no one really took Pido Jarencio seriously. And many took it as a joke when the rookie mentor proudly stated his team philosophy during the pre-season press conference.

"We have the three Ps—pride, *puso* and *palaban* (pride, heart and to be a fighter)," Jarencio said as he drew laughter from the reporters.

The former gutsy Ginebra guard then kept everyone in stitches when he added that his main game plan was to infuse his former team's trademark never-say-die attitude.

As it turned out, Jarencio wasn't being funny.

Last Monday, the Tigers showed that a lot of spunk could indeed carry a team to the top.

Even with no big names in their roster, the Tigers bagged the title by stunning top-seeded Ateneo Blue Eagles in overtime, 76-74, in their winner-take-all Game 3 match.

It was a fitting victory that capped their wonder year. In the thrilling decider, the Tigers got back into the game the same way they scratched and clawed back into the season.

When main men Jervy Cruz and Allan Evangelista fouled out in the fourth period, Jarencio said the Tigers' upset bid never died even when the game extended into overtime.

"I just told the players if they want to win, don't let go," he said.

And minutes later, the team that was practically ignored early in the season took the spotlight as the new champion.

"It was all hard work," said Finals Most Valuable Player Jojo Duncil. "Maybe it's also a miracle. I know that I, for one, kept praying even while playing in the game."

But for many spectators during the classic Finals series, it was the Tigers' desire that seemed more apparent.

"I have many players who could be named MVP," said Jarencio.

After praising Duncil's end-game heroics, Jarencio also cited the impressive performances of Dylan Ababou, Anthony Espiritu, Cruz and Evangelista in the Finals series.

"Our turning point was after the first round, that's when we made some adjustments," said Jarencio during the post-game interview. "From a running team, we focused on our transition defense. But I never promised anything. The team was just always ready."

And when Jarencio reiterated his three Ps, reporters took note this time. Everyone finally believed him.

Fiba extends d for unified fed

PANGILINAN

By June Navarro

THE INTERNATIONAL BASKETBALL Federation (Fiba) gave the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas an extension after the new group failed to complete the unification process on time.

In a formal communication to the Fiba, the three-man panel, which gave birth to the SBP, requested a 10-day extension that will culminate in a national congress and election of officers on Oct. 10.

Fiba secretary general Patrick Baumann agreed to grant the exten-

sion, the SBP statem

The panel, comp inas Basketball pr Atienza, Basketball the Philippines hea Manny V. Pangilina also notified the points of disagreen SBP.

Aside from hold congress and electio panel has yet to val bership of the PB an integrating them int

Baumann was al 25-man board of tru

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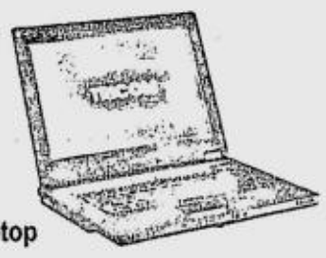

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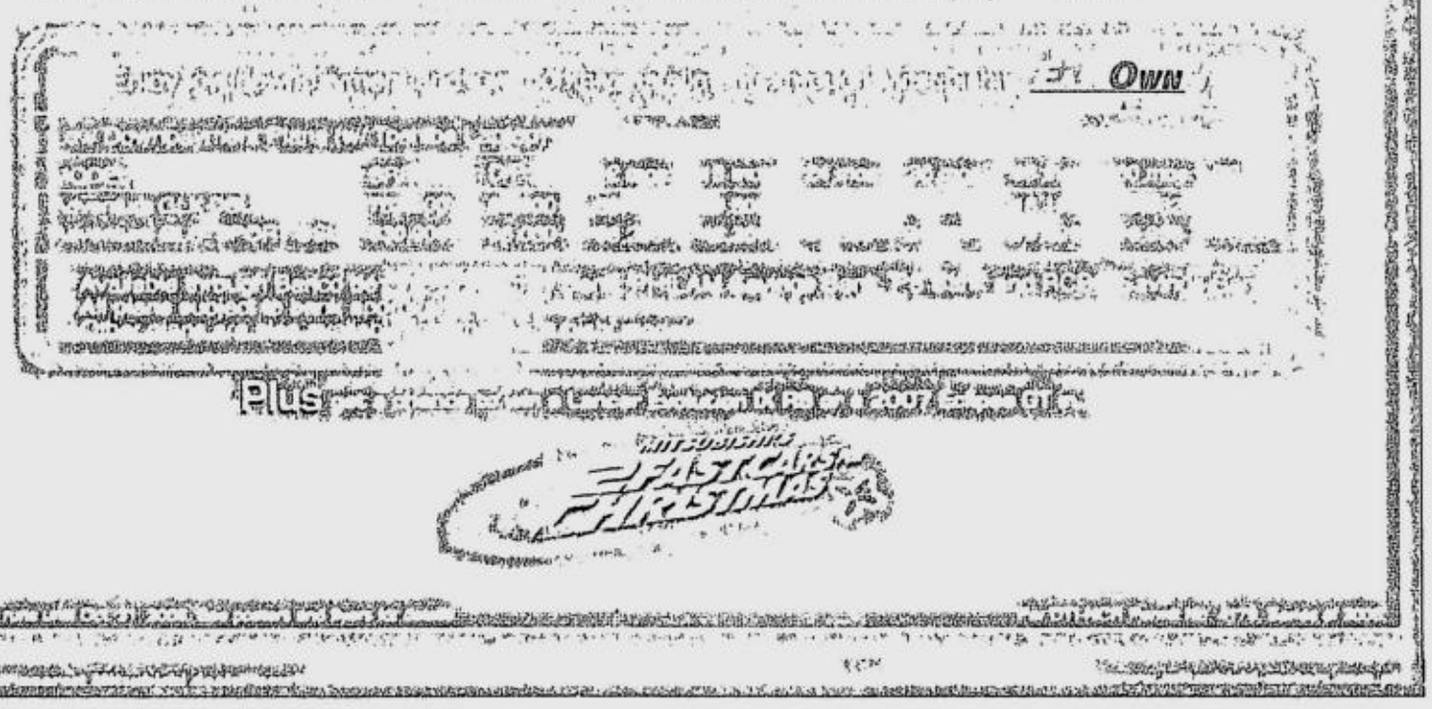

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Tigers' triumph a

By Francis Ochoa

AS DYLAN ABABOU STEPPED INTO the stripe for the second of two free throws that would shatter a deadlock—he had earlier missed the first—he closed his eyes and willed everything around him to just disappear.

The cheers from one side of the Araneta Coliseum and the boos from the other. The players lined up on both sides of the shaded area. The coaches screaming from the sidelines.

In the privacy of that quieted world, Ababou allowed only a few things to exist: Himself and the basket. And the prayers he knew the Santo Tomas faithful were whispering.

"I could feel that a lot of people were praying," said Ababou. "I told myself, 'just release, just release.' I missed the first but I knew deep inside I was going to make the second."

The sweet-shooting swingman knew he would make the shot because of the prayers out there. He just didn't know how fervently they were being whispered.

Chris Ramirez, a perky 21-year-old chemistry student, had just finished reciting the rosary four times. She started out with one mystery in the first quarter then proceeded to recite all four when she felt that more prayers were needed. By the time Ababou was about to launch the crucial free throw, she had run out of mysteries.

"So I just started reciting Hail Marys," she said.

Less than 10 basketball seconds later, it was 20-year-old Jennifer Andrada's turn to invoke divine help as Jun Cortez took his turn at the stripe, this time in an attempt to seal a victory that would complete the underdog Tigers' Disney-ish ride to the UAAP crown.

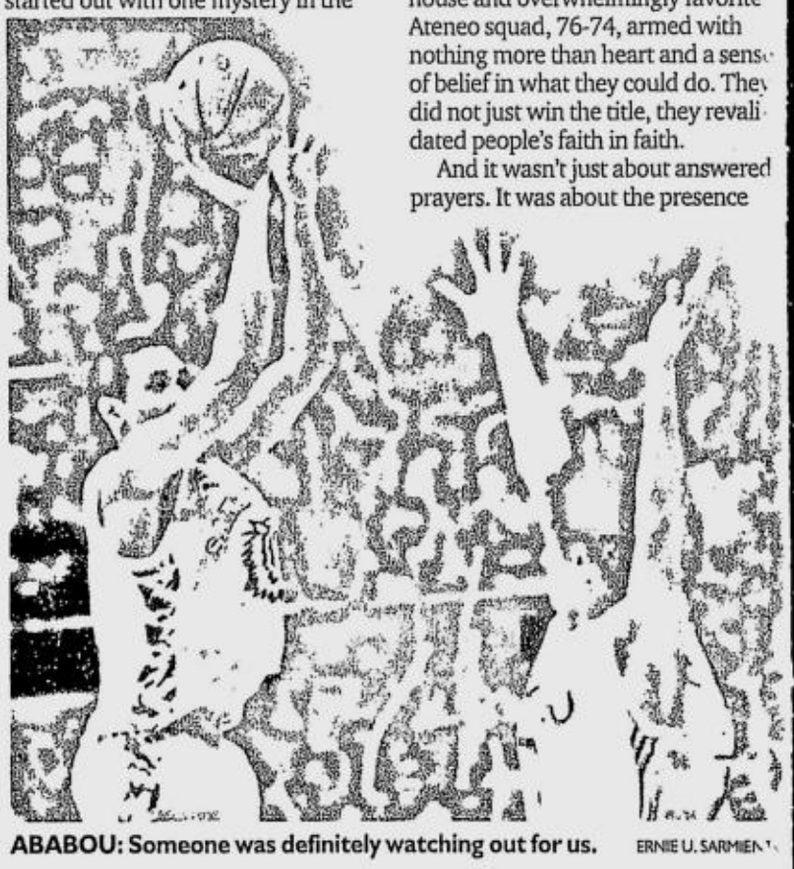
"Please," the 20-year-old business administration student pleaded earnestly. "Just this one, Lord, before graduate."

Cortez never heard Andrada's prayer. He never even knew who she was. Or what part of the coliseum she sat in. But like Ababou, he felt it.

"That's why I was so confident taking the first shot," said Cortez. He made the basket, stretching the Tigers' lead to two. He muffed the second and Ababou joined in the rebound fray, tapping the ball loose, just enough to milk the final three seconds of overtime dry.

And so it came to pass. The Tigers, of all teams, brought down a powerhouse and overwhelmingly favorite Ateneo squad, 76-74, armed with nothing more than heart and a sense of belief in what they could do. They did not just win the title, they revalidated people's faith in faith.

And it wasn't just about answered prayers. It was about the presence



ABABOU: Someone was definitely watching out for us. ERNIE U. SARMIEN

UST defies a Com

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

NO, IT COULD NOT BE OPENLY CLAIMED AS A case of the better team winning.

Far from it. The Santo Tomas Growling Tigers reclaimed the UAAP basketball crown on Monday because they were the better escape artists.

They won because they dared to defy the odds.

Pushed closest to the cliff, they kept their nerves when everything had looked lost.

They won because they were braver, steadier.

The Ateneo Blue Eagles?

They had everything to regret, nothing to be ashamed of.

They had lost to a more blessed team.

* * *

No, for Ateneo, it could not be the case of the favorite dropping what had looked like a won championship game.

Okay, UST had lost its team pillar, the powerful center Jervy Cruz, with a minute and 16 seconds left in regulation.

Santo Tomas was also being outplayed and outscored in stretches.

However, the Tigers simply snapped back and snatched the title after the Eagles had started to run away with the silverware.

Of course, UST's steadiness would not be defined by the horrible misses from the foul line at the most crucial period—when half a point could spell vict

Add to that the sharper heroes, like Macky Escalona, who the killing homestret

Everything had app for the Tigers

But in an incredible tual series MVP, took o

Once the Tigers ha tried hard as they did them off.

Ateneo had all the win it but Intal also

Meanwhile, Santo shots, suddenly foun line.

It could be said t

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told that the
tees will serve in an interim capacity until such time the SBP holds a national congress and elects its regular board of trustees by June 2008 to coincide with the Olympic calendar of 2008-2012.

Together with Atienza, Lina and Pangilinan, 11 members each from the BAP and the PB form the SBP board of trustees.

The SBP, the product of the marriage between the PB and the BAP, was also registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission with five incorporators, including the three-man panel.

Typhoon leaves RP shuttlers 'homeless'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TYPHOON MILENYO, WHICH STRUCK the country's capital hard last week, left its mark on the national badminton training pool, leaving at least five of its teenage members residing at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex without electricity, water and even a roof.

Brothers Andrei and JP Babad, brothers Anjo and Ian Bautista and teammate Ian Mendez have been sleeping atop office desks right at the lobby of the Rizal Badminton Hall after their quarters were devastated by the typhoon.

Milenyo's strong winds ripped off the entire central roofing of the newly refurbished badminton hall and afternoon monsoon rains only added to the young shuttlers misfortunes as they don't have any shelter from the downpour.

"We just sit down at the lobby and grab a chair to sleep, sometimes on the desks," Ian Bautista told the INQUIRER. Most of the boys come from Butuan City and have been residing inside the sports copmplex as members of the RP training pool. With the blackout, they have been forced to sleep in the badminton hall's lobby.

Still, the training continues under the tutelage of RP assistant coach Allan de Leon.

"When it's not raining we train, but it always does in the afternoon," said the 15-year-old Ian Bautista.

They, however, push through with physical conditioning at the RMSC's Philippine Center for Sports Medicine and around the track oval.

"They said power will be restored soon so we will continue sleeping in the lobby for the meantime," added Bautista.

Last week, the Philippine Sports Commission estimated some P3 million damage around the RMSC, while training of swimmers and divers was also disrupted when Trace College Aquatic Center was hit by waist-high floods.

GARCIA

Asian Games squad finds no sponsors

By June Navarro

WITH 59 DAYS LEFT BEFORE THE GAMES, potential sponsors have continued to shy away from helping Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Olympic Committee bankroll the 362-strong RP delegation that will compete in the Doha, Qatar, meet scheduled Dec. 1-15.

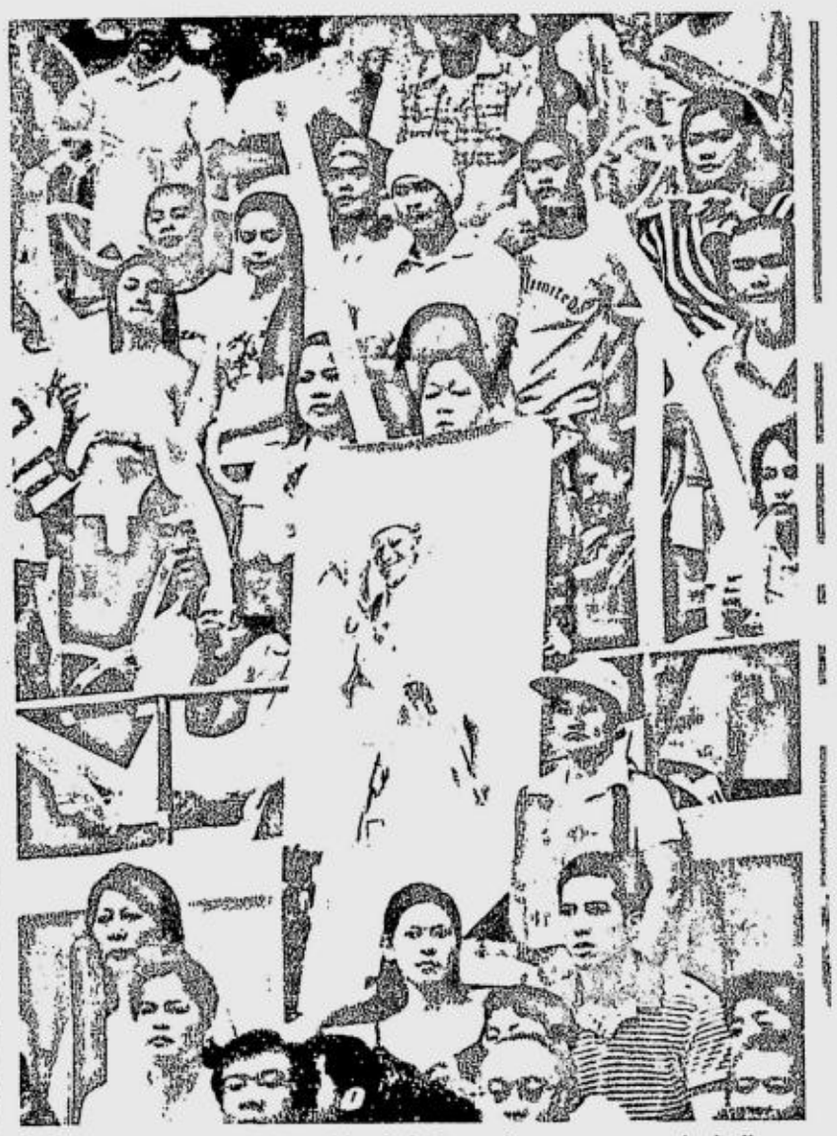
Deputy chief of mission Ritchie Garcia yesterday confirmed that the national team has yet to hear a word from the solicitations sent to some of the top corporations in the country.

The PSC and POC have sent solicitations to San Miguel Corp., Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the Lucio Tan Group, the John Gokongwei Group, Globe and the Henry Sy Group, among others, last month.

The fund-raising campaign hit a snag when typhoon Milenyo hit Metro Manila last week.

The RP contingent, which has 240 athletes on its roster, is staring at a budget deficit of at least P2.8 million even if the PSC has already pledged P30 million for the country's sojourn to the Asiad.

showcase of faith


SANTO Tomas fans were seeking help from almost everyone, including the late Pope John Paul II, a two-time visitor to the school. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Cortez also felt just before taking the second shot that missed. The one that made him grow goosebumps all over.

"I felt like he was there," said Cortez, referring to late teammate and John Lee Apil, who died last summer while trying to save two kids from drowning.

The rest of the Tigers agreed that something supernatural was at work in UST's magical season. From Jervy Cruz, who carried the team in the postseason, to Anthony Espiritu, who knocked in a triple to fuel the Tigers' last-ditch rally in regulation, to Jojo Duncil, the hero who alternately made big shots and whispered prayers in overtime, to Ababou and Cortez. They all felt Apil never stopped being a teammate.

"When he died, I knew that we would have additional help from up there," Ababou said. "How else could you explain that we went from the bottom [of the standings] to the top?"

Cortez, Apil's closest friend on the team, was more specific, recounting the time the Tigers were holed out in their dugout in a Final Four match against University of the East and a black butterfly fluttered in the middle of their huddle.

In Game 2 of the finals, Cortez added, while Ateneo's Ford Arao was about to take a free throw, a butterfly zipped right in front of him.

And just like that, the Tigers knew they were not alone. Not with an absent teammate finding a way to, as the Tigers believed, make his presence felt. And certainly not with loyal supporters storming heaven to the point of running out of prayers to recite.

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at. UST reclaimed the UAAP basketball kingship because it also dared violate one of the Ten Commandments.

It was a big steal for the Growling Tigers, originally known as the Glowing Goldies in the days of Renato Reyes, Danny Florencio and other elder legends of the varsity circuit.

UST grabbed victory from the Ateneo Eagles with one of the finest heists in Philippine basketball lore.

Of course, the Tigers had to ride on greater resourcefulness, stronger nerves, to avoid being caught.

* * *

Anyway, it would indeed be corny to suggest that they should request the Vatican to assign a team to investigate UST's miracle win.

But then, was this not a case of the Dominicans having a better system of worship than the Jesuits?

There must have been some supernatural intervention out there at the Big Dome Monday evening.

For proof—after the deafening hysterics, the endless jumping, the fearless clawing and shoving—the game was inexplicably decided in the quiet and sanctity of the foul line, when most of the fans were praying, clasping rosaries, their eyes averted from the playing court.

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Prize-money delay doesn't bother Bata

By Roy Luarca

EFREN "BATA" REYES HAS YET TO RECEIVE his $500,000 (P25 million) prize money for ruling the 2006 International Pool Tour (IPT) World 8-Ball Open. But the Hall of Famer is far from worried.

Neither are the rest of the Filipinos who took part in the IPT Tour, nor their managers—despite nasty rumors that the IPT is a scam.

Reyes said he and his colleagues have faith in the IPT, founded by Kevin Trudeau, which is reportedly being acquired by Macau billionaire and gambling magnate Stanley Ho to the tune of $150 million.

"*Hindi ako nag-aalala, alam mo naman na hindi lang ako ang sumali doon at lahat kami ay may tiwala sa IPT* (I'm not worried, it's not only me who took part in the event and all of us have faith in the IPT)," said Reyes.

"*Walang katotohanan 'yun* [IPT is a scam]. *Normal lang na minsan na*-late *yung* prize money, *pero binibigay din* (That's not true. It's normal that the prize money is given late sometimes).

"*Nakuha ko naman ang mga* prize money *nung mga sinalihan ko sa IPT, eto lang ang* late. *Pero pinadalahan kami ng sulat ni* Mr. Trudeau na *medyo* late *lang nang konti. Isa pa, may kasulatan na kami* (I've gotten my prize money from the IPT events I took part in, it's only the World Open which is late. But Mr. Trudeau sent us a letter informing us of this development. For another, we already have a contract).

Marlon Manalo, the 2005 World Pool 9-ball semifinalist who was eliminated in the second round of the World Open, concurred with Reyes.

"*Hindi pa dumarating 'yung premyo namin sa IPT, pero 'yung unang* event *nila na malaki naayos na* (Our prizes from the IPT have yet to arrive, but their first big event has been settled)," Manalo said.

Manalo is referring to the last IPT North American 8-Ball Championship in Las Vegas, Nevada, where he pocketed $99,000 for finishing second to German Thorsten Hohmann.

Trudeau e-mailed the managers (including Aristeo "Putch" Puyat and Perry Mariano) of the players concerned explaining the reasons for the delay.

The biggest factor, according to Trudeau, is the finalization of the IPT acquisition by the Ho Interactive.

Online billiards forums, most notably the AZ-Billiards.com, have gathered over 20,000 messages commenting and denouncing the inability of IPT to hand out the prize money on time.

ME, WORRY? Efren "Bata" Reyes says he has been properly notified by organizers that his P25-million check for his World Open win will be delayed. JESS YUSON

Puyat, acknowledged as Philippine billiards godfather and benefactor of Puyat and Francisco "Django" Bustamante, is convinced that Trudeau will honor his commitments.

"In the first two big events of IPT they have shelled out abut $3.5 million in prizes," said Puyat. "Out of that amount more than $700,000 went to Filipino players." *With a report from Marlon Bernardino*

Doves take on Cards in Champs League tilt

MANY-TIME NCRAA CHAMPION ST. FRANCIS of Assisi Doves face the Mapua Cardinals in the opener of the 4th Collegiate Champions League tomorrow at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym.

The Doves, seeded first in the second season of the national championship, are only ranked ninth this year. The Cardinals, fourth in the NCAA this season, are seeded eighth.

UCAA champion and host EAC Generals face the University of the East Red Warriors in the main game of the opener.

The Generals are seeded 12th while the Warriors are seeded fifth. Games will be aired live on Basketball TV.

The teams in the "Sweet 16" are ranked by basketball writers and columnists of daily newspapers based on their season-long performance in their respective leagues, a first in the young history of the event.

Ateneo Blue Eagles and NCAA champion San Beda College Red Lions are seeded first and second while UAAP titlist University of Santo Tigers and Philippine Christian University Dolphins are seeded third and fourth, respectively.

The other teams in the upper half of the draw are the sixth seeded Letran Knights and the seventh seeded Adamson Falcons.

Completing the Sweet 16 are No. 10 University of Visayas, No. 11 University of Cebu, No. 13 AMA Computer University, No. 14 Jose Rizal University, No. 15 National University and No. 16 Philippine Maritime Institute.

The other first-round matches pit Letran against UC, Ateneo against PMI, Adamson against UV, UST against JRU, PCU against Amacu and San Beda against NU.

Razon football opener: Ateneo edges La Salle

ATENEO'S Alvin Perez (left) slides to dispossess La Salle forward Kevin Deano at the PhilSports field. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ATENEO DREW FIRST BLOOD AGAINST ARCH-rival La Salle with a gripping 1-0 win last Sunday in a rousing start to the Terry Razon Copa Filipina football tournament at the PhilSports field in Pasig City.

Striker Gregorio Cancio punched through an opening in front of the goal mouth to boot in the winning goal three minutes into the second half of the exciting match held in honor of the late football patron Terry Razon.

The two squads battled tooth and nail for 90 minutes in front of about 2,000 avid football fans despite little light as only two of the field's three light towers were working.

La Salle scrambled to try to equalize but the Blue Eagles of coach Ompong Merida stood their ground in the opener of the tournament organized by the National Capital Region Football Association.

The La Salle cheering squad added spice to the simple opening ceremonies of the event featuring the top 12 teams in Metro Manila.

"We welcome the Terry Razon Copa Familia football tournament and look forward to it becoming a permanent fixture in the NCRFA's growing calendar of competitions," said NCRFA president Jose Vito Borromeo.

Borromeo, national player Freddie Gonzales, Fifa women's committee member Cristy Ramos and former RP standout Jose Mari Martinez did the ceremonial kick-off.

La Salle actually put one over Ateneo in an earlier match after its women's squad shut out the Lady Eagles, 5-0, in a match of the NCRFA's Metro Manila Girls' Football Association competition.

Other teams in the fold are Army, Navy, Air Force, Kaya, Lions, San Beda, UAAP Selection, Union, Pasargad and Far Eastern University.

The eliminations will be a robin series with the top four squads advancing to the semifinals.

Dableo tops Caraga chess, bags P50,000

ASIAN GAMES-BOUND INTERNATIONAL MASTER Ronald Dableo won his last two games to rule the 2006 Caraga Chess Championship at the Otis Mall in Butuan City. The 28-year-old Dableo beat erstwhile leader National Master Elmer Sumngat in 45 moves of an Irregular Opening, then subdued NM Mirabeau Maga in 40 of a French Defense in the final round late Monday night to pocket P50,000. Dableo, of the Air Force, finished with 8.0 points on account of seven wins and two draws, relegating IM Yves Ranola, IM Richard Bitoon and NM Alex Milagrosa to a share of second to fourth places, worth P15,000 each. Dableo's two draws came from NM Ernesto Absin and Ali Branzuela in this event organized by Judge Edgar Manilag. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

MY Games Invt'l comes off wraps Oct. 22

THE STAGE IS SET FOR THE SECond Manila Youth Games National Invitational slated Oct. 22 to 29 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and the San Andres Sports Complex in Manila.

Some of the country's finest young athletes will dispute the championships in six sports, Ali Atienza, chair of the organizing Manila Sports Council (Masco), told yesterday's PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant.

Atienza said he expects at least 40 local government units (LGUs) to field teams this year.

Competitions in track and field, taekwondo, badminton, football, softball and baseball will be held for the different age groups—8 years and under, 10-under, 12-under, 13 to 15 years and 16 to 17 years.

"The search for fresh, young talents is on," said Atienza, also the Presidential Adviser on Youth and Sports. "For the second straight year, this will be a collaboration among the different LGUs."

Atienza said the MYG, which started in 2001, has proved to be a breeding ground for members of the national training pool in several sports.

Atienza also said in the same session, sponsored by PAGCOR Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Masco, that they will seek the help of the private sector due to the limited Games budget.

Many of the participating local governments have also contributed funds and other forms of assistance to ensure the success of the event.

"This is no longer an MYG for Manila's young athletes, it's for the different LGUs as well," said the son of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Mission Hills courses for Rotary golf tourney

THE WORLD-RENOWNED MISsion Hills Golf Club in Shenzhen, China, will again be the venue of the Asian leg of the Rotary Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines.

Rotarians and guests will compete in the standard RGFFP conditions of play, using club handicaps and the PAL points system.

According to RGFFP president Poch Borromeo and directors Nonoy Braga and Albert Que who recently returned from China, the venues will be Mission Hills' Olazabal and Vijay Singh courses.

Defending individual champions are Zixiong Wu of team Quanzhou, Class A with 58 points; Salem Vercide of RC General Santos, Class B, 53 points; and Mar Dos Pueblos, RC General Santos, Class C, 54 points. Team Quanzhou won the team title.

For inquiries, call the RGFFP Secretariat at 724-8174 or 721-2667 local 110, or fax 721-5940.

WINNING COOKS: Jade Agnes Haw, professor chef Rhea Castro and Harriett Eden U (second to fourth from left), of the College of Saint Benilde, celebrate their victory in the recent Grapescapade 2006 Culinary Treasure Hunt, a competition that required teams to go through a series of physical and mental challenges culminating in a cook-off. St. Benilde bested 22 other teams from culinary schools in the event sponsored by Fresh California Grapes. Mandy Saracho, Fresh California Grapes representative in the Philippines (left), handed the top prize to the winners.

Giants test Phone Pals

From page A23

bounce back from an out-of-the-country loss in the 4:40 p.m. opener opposite the Coca-Cola Tigers.

Kerby Raymundo and reigning Most Valuable Player James Yap will again banner Purefoods on both ends, even as Jondan Salvador, a prime rookie prospect last year, suits up after recovering from a career-threatening knee injury.

Marc Pingris, a key figure in Purefoods' six-game conquest of the Bulls the last time out, will be coming off a breakout year in the pros and will definitely continue to enjoy the minutes he did when Salvador tore an anterior cruciate ligament last year.

Asi Taulava, still an immovable force at 32, leads the star-studded Phone Pals.

The Aces, meanwhile, played way below par in Guam last Thursday, bowing to Red Bull in an ugly fashion after being dominated all game, 99-93.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Blue Iris (7), Dancing Slew (1), Ikaw Pag-asa Ko (3), Can And Will (2)

Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri) —Batang Eleven (8), Amgonnatellmydade (7), Tigentic (6), Leica N'Raven (4), Lady Inday (2)

Race 3—(Hazit Coming (5), Bunker Buster (4), Paminsanminsan (3), Be My Pride (7), Loveko'To

Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Hand-Picked (8), Tiger Rally (1), Casanova (9), Euphoria (4), Crew Cut (3)

Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)— Dondon's Entry (7), Daldalera (8), Western Dancer (2), American Idol (10), Il Amorosa (1)

Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Afternoon Delight (8), Military Might (9), BMY Baby)7), Go Go Elgene (5), Do Re Mi (2)

Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Magic Bullet (5), Leading Man (11), Lady Be Gold (7), American Beauty (10), Danella's Angel (8)

Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri) —Blondie Baj (5), Mesmerize (1), Dona Gelay (3), Kiwi Rose (8), Red Hot Water (10), Aya's Dream (7)

SPORTSWATCH

Clash of GM's in Tanauan Open

THE ENTRY OF FELLOW GMS MARK PARAGUA, JOEY ANTONIO AND Nelson Mariano II present the biggest challenge to Eugene Torre's bid to keep his crown in the ACCA-organized and sponsored Open Chess Championship set Oct. 14-15 at the First Asia Institute for Technology and Humanities (FAITH), Tanauan City. Veterans who have confirmed their participation include IM Ronnie Roca and former national junior champion Robert Suelo Jr. Players have until Oct. 7 to text or call tournament organizer and director Ricky Navalta at 0920-9231150 so they can enjoy a discounted P300 tournament fee.

WBL opening reset to Oct. 15

THE OPENING OF THE MILO BEST CENTER'S WOMEN'S BASKETBALL League has been moved from Oct. 8 to Oct. 15 at the Xavier School sports complex. The opening ceremony will unwrap at 7:30 a.m. According to Commissioner Rolando B. Omampo, school activities have been disrupted by Typhoon "Milenyo," prompting some schools to request for the postponement. Participants must complete documents on or before Oct. 7. Otherwise, they will be dropped from the tourney. Call 372-3066 or 411-6260.

Makati Coliseum 5-stag derby

THE DUEL OF METRO MANILA'S BIGTIME COCKERS RESUME TODAY AT Makati Coliseum as the Concrete Breaker 5-stag derby unfolds at 5 p.m. with 80 matches lined up. Sponsor is B-Meg Derby Ace. Participants include Mayor Nene Aguilar, Super Pacman entry, William Co, Efren Canlas, Boy Marzo, Boy Javier, William Go, Pepito Ngo, Butchoy Olano, Lito Roque, Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud, Madlambayan Brothers, Louie Cua, Boy de Roca, Walter Villanueva and derby host Emil Chua. For reservation of cockhouses, call 896-3545 and 895-6475.

Cyberfriends finals today at SJC

MORE THAN 100 FIGHTS WILL SPICE UP THE CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND of Cyberfriends 5-stag derby at 1 p.m. today at San Juan Coliseum with Sagupaan Complexor 3000 as main backer. Cyberfriends president Raul Ebeo said 32 new participants will field straight five stags. Fourteen entries have two points each from Monday's opening round, among them Marga, JMSH Orange Mob, Sebastian, Pasay Cockpit, 2M Rambulan and EDL Excellence. SJC's regular hackfights resume this Friday and Saturday, said pit managers Ronnie Lacsina and Renato Shio. Call 725-5369 and 725-6563.

Vizcaya-Ifugao breeders get support

THE 3-STAG FINALS OF THE VISCAYA IFUGAO GAMEFOWL BREEDERS Association (Vigba) 1st Leg 6-Stag Derby will be held Oct. 6 at the New Solano Cockpit. Thunderbird Platinum is supporting VIGBA headed by engineer Moises Almuete Jr. Vigba members were treated to a farm tour of Blue Blade Game Farm by Thunderbird recently. They were entertained by multi-awarded rooster-raiser Sonny Lagon. Among those who visited the home of the "Blue Blade Sweaters" were Vigba vice president Orly Alvarez; secretary Nikki Diego; treasurer Randy Moreno; PIO Jeff Perocho and Ben Rimbiosa. For details on how to join Vigba, call 0927-2540857/0927-3685898.

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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RP gets $410M in loans from World Bank

To benefit education, health, LGUs

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE WORLD BANK yesterday signed three loan agreements totalling $410 million for the education, health and local government sectors.

The loans, which were approved by the bank's board three months ago, were signed with President Macapagal-Arroyo as witness in Malacañang.

The three loans, the biggest assistance package from the World Bank for the Philippines in recent years, will finance the National Program Support for Basic Education, the National Sector Support for Health Reform, and the Support for Strategic Local Development and Investment.

The $200-million loan for education will help improve quality and equity in learning outcomes in basic education.

The $110-million health loan will help address the high cost of health care and potential loss of earnings, especially among the poor in the Philippines. The program will make access to health insurance and health care more equitable and make the health system more efficient in targeting and in meeting the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged.

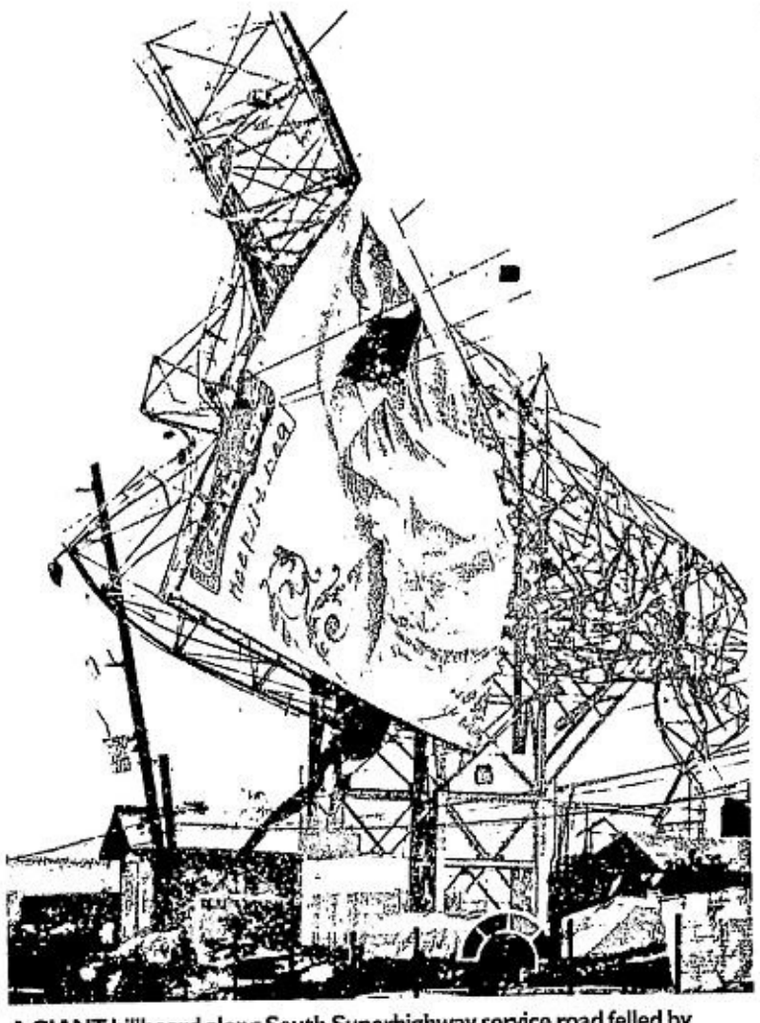
The education and health programs will be implemented by the Department of Education and the Department of Health, respectively.

Both programs are designed to support strategic priorities in the national budget to help both the health and education departments improve governance and finance expenditures critical to the delivery of health and education services.

The loans follow a new scheme under which World Bank loans directly finance high-priority line items under the regular national budget.

This mode was introduced in response to the government's request to move away from traditional project-based development

RP GETS/ B3



A GIANT billboard along South Superhighway service road felled by strong winds at the height of Typhoon "Milenyo" on Thursday. RODEL ROTONI

Peso surges to 49.88 to a dollar

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY CLIMBED to a four-year high of 49.88 against the dollar on sustained foreign exchange inflows and a regional currency market perked up by prospective cuts in the US interest rate.

The local currency opened at 49.95 at the spot foreign exchange market Philippine Dealing System and closed at its intraday high of 49.88, gaining another 13 centavos from Monday's finish of 50.01 against the greenback. This was the local currency's strongest level since May 23, 2002. Since the start of the year, the local currency has appreciated by 6.4 percent against the dollar.

"The movement of the peso is due to a number of factors—we continued to see forex inflows. Inflows are higher than outflows and therefore the net result is an appreciating peso," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters yesterday.

Tetangco said that remittances from overseas Filipino workers, export receipts as well as foreign direct and portfolio investments had sustained the peso's strong momentum.

"The other factor causing this is that the US dollar is also relatively weak and therefore the other side of that is a stronger peso," the BSP chief said.

Currencies across the region also surged across the board yesterday, reversing the downtrend seen the previous day, on reports that US manufacturing growth slowed to its weakest in 16

PESO/ B3

Political winds buffet ₱2-B billboard industry

By Daxim L. Lucas

IN THE WAKE OF TYPHOON "Milenyo," it is easy to overlook the contribution of the advertising sector in general, and the billboard industry in particular, to the growth of the local economy.

Indeed, with at least one typhoon-induced fatality blotting its record, the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP) is now fully on the defensive.

Since last week, officials of this lobby group of about a hundred local billboard makers and operators have been explaining themselves hoarse to a feeding frenzy of politicians, members of the media and the public hungry for blood.

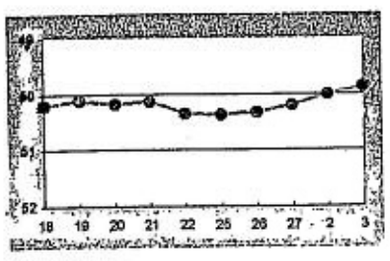
"What they don't see is what we contribute," OAAP president Carlo S. Llave said in an interview yesterday. "What we do here helps the economy."

It can be difficult to imagine how towering steel frames draped with colored tarpaulin sheets can lubricate the wheels of commerce, but the OAAP chief explained that advertising helps spur consumer demand. This, in turn, prompts companies to produce more goods and services, which, in turn, helps create jobs.

POLITICAL/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 49.88 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 3, 2006

¥ 116.50 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 3, 2006

GOLD: $602.20-602.70

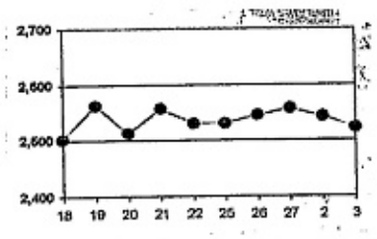
per ounce Hong Kong, Sept. 29, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES closed 0.79-percent lower yesterday as investors took profits for the second straight session, encouraged by a lackluster Wall Street performance, dealers said.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

They said Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) and Globe Telecom were under pressure from concerns that repair work in the wake of Typhoon "Milenyo" might dent their profits.

The composite index lost 20.19 points to 2,522.50, after trading between 2,513.67 and 2,540.88.

The broader all-shares index fell 8.26 points to 1,539.86.

Losers led gainers 62 to 30, with 51 stocks unchanged.

"We were expecting a rebound given the peso's rise past the 50 to the dollar mark but that obviously was not enough to inspire investors to go back into the market," said Rommel Macapagal of Westlink Global Equities.

"Investors are looking for excuses to unload and then buy on dips. I think overall sentiment though remains positive given improving economic fundamentals," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

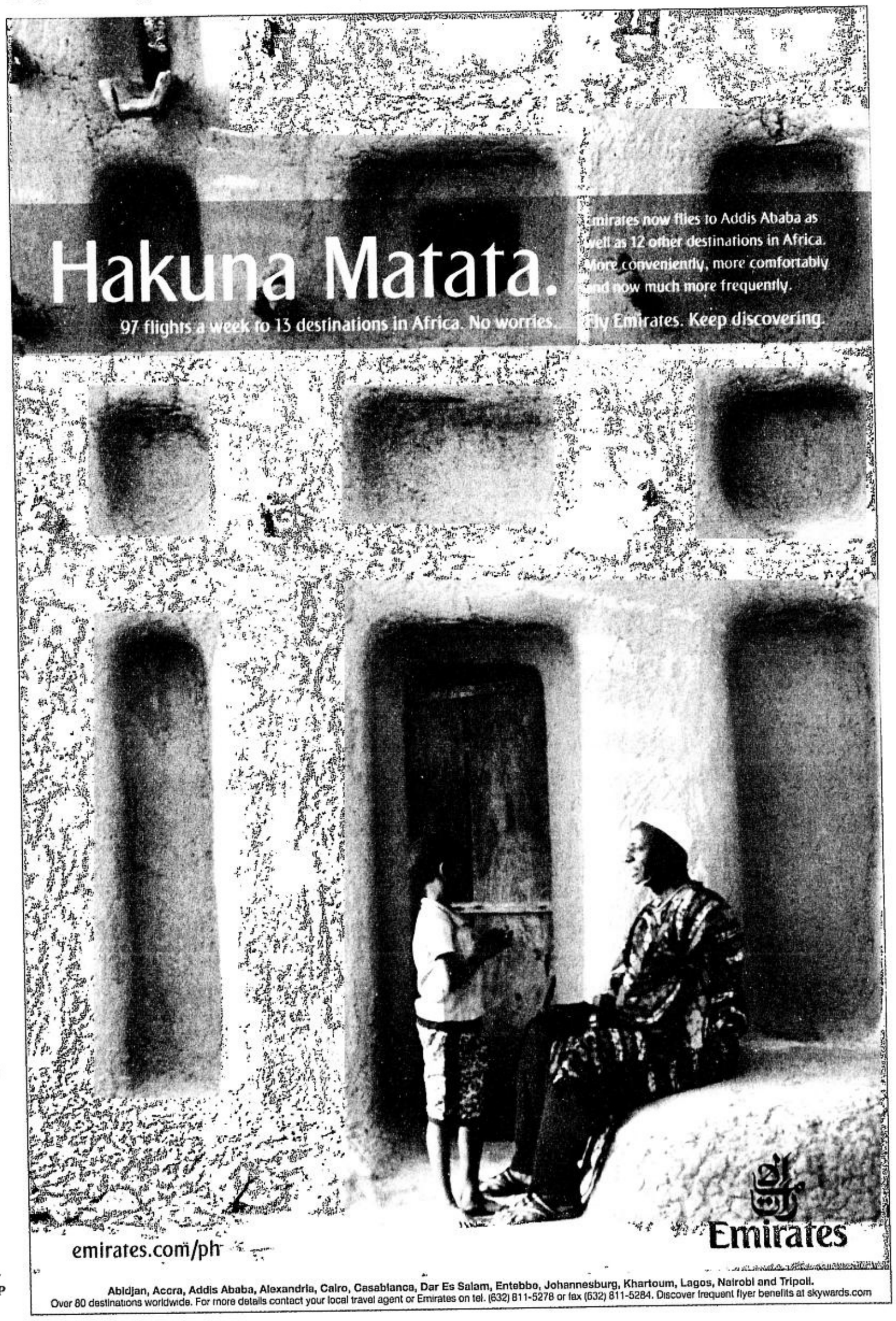
Economists said annual inflation likely eased for the sixth straight month in September on the back of a stronger peso and lower oil prices.

PLDT, the most active stock, was down P35 to P2,215, accounting for a quarter of total turnover.

Globe fell P15 to P1,055 and parent Ayala Corp. retreated P5 to P460.

San Miguel A-shares were steady at P65 but its B-shares fell 50 centavos to P76.

AFP



More mine firms to get permits

Megaworld engages in massive property dev't, sinking in $1.2B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

DOMINANT OFFICE AND HIGH-rise homes developer Megaworld Corp. is bullish on the retail, office and middle-income housing markets as it plans to pour in $1.16 billion to fund massive property projects over the next 10 years.

Megaworld executive director Kingson Sian said in a presentation to stockholders yesterday that the bulk of the amount will be spent for residential development, while $485 million will be set aside for projects that will cater to the fast-growing retail and business process and outsourcing (BPO) sectors.

Data from the Board of Investments indicated that BPO workers are expected to grow to 200,000 workers by the end of 2006 and may even swell to up to 1 million workers by 2010.

Data from Colliers International also showed that the backlog for middle income housing in 2006 is expected to reach roughly 241,000 units from 8,740 units in 1996.

Further supporting the property boom is the expected remittances from overseas Filipino workers, which is expected to hit $12 billion this year.

Megaworld will fund its planned BPO projects through funds raised from its share offer this year ($105 million), a recent bond offer ($100 million) and $280 million from internally generated funds.

Aside from this, Megaworld has existing cash resources of P5 to P6 billion.

In the next few years, Megaworld will focus its energies on six key projects.

For its first 15-hectare township development dubbed "Eastwood Cyberpark" in Libis, Quezon City, Megaworld's total investment is estimated at $250 million. Launched in 1997, the cyberpark is the country's first information technology-based special economic zone, with 17 high-rise residential developments.

"Forbes Town Center" at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig meanwhile is a five-hectare joint venture of Megaworld and Bonifacio West Development Corp. The project is estimated at P15 billion.

FTC features two residential sections: the first consists of seven buildings of Forbeswood residences, while the second is comprised of three Bellagio towers plus two upcoming high-rise buildings that offer front row view of the Manila Golf course.

"McKinley Hill" is Megaworld's 50-hectare mixed-use project in Fort Bonifacio.

This development consists of homes and villas. Its 15-hectare corporate block dubbed McKinley Hill CyberPark aims to lure information technology and BPO firms. The CyberPark has a floorplate of 200,000 square meters and was declared an economic zone last August 2005.

Currently undergoing construction is McKinley Corporate Plaza, the first office tower of the CyberPark, spanning 40,000 square meters, and will be completed by the end of 2007.

"Newport City" meanwhile is, envisioned to be one of the most promising hotel and golf resorts in the region. The sprawling 25-hectare project is a joint venture between state-owned Bases Conversion and Development Authority and Megaworld, which will rise at the Villamor Air Base near terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Pasay City. Newport City will host a residential area, an office park, retail centers, a church and hotel. Last July, Megaworld inked a contract with Marriott Hotels International B.V. for a new and 7-hectare 356-room Mariott Hotel in Newport City.

Last July, Megaworld and joint venture partner Araneta Center Inc. launched the 5.7 hectare "Manhattan Garden City," the country's largest residential condominium project and first mass transit-oriented residential development with links to the LRT 2 and MRT 4 systems in Araneta, Cubao.

This project consists of 19 towers totaling 9,000 residential condominium units.

To boost demand for housing projects, Megaworld is also set to offer affordable financing with a partner local bank. Details of this venture have yet to be announced.

Gov't examines environment programs

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIronment and Natural Resources has resumed the processing of mineral exploration and production permits that have been pending for the last nine months.

DENR Secretary Angelo Reyes has asked mining permit applicants to make individual project presentations at his office. According to sources at the agency, this procedure would bring the mining applicants closer to securing their permits.

The mining companies that have already made presentations are MRL Gold Philippines Inc., Egerton Gold Philippines Inc., Buena Suerte Mining Corp., an affiliate of Australian Oxiana Limited, and Manila Mining Corp.

A ranking DENR official said that Reyes had also asked the applicants to submit their environment programs and social preparations for the community, as well as documents pertaining to their technical and financial resources.

MRL Gold expects to obtain its exploration permit sometime soon.

James Anthony Climie, president of MRL Gold Philippines, said that the company had submitted a petition to the DENR to explore parts of a property in Malimono, Surigao for gold and copper.

The Malimono site measures 508.12 hectares.

Another foreign subsidiary, Buena Suerte Mining Corp., an affiliate of Australian Oxiana Ltd. has signified its interest in surveying 4,192 hectares of Liloan, San Francisco and San Ricardo in Southern Leyte for possible copper and gold resources.

Also, 10 medium-scale mining companies have applied for a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) to extract nickel, chromite, limestone and cobalt.

The MPSA is a mineral accord that will allow the national government to share in the production of a mining company. Under the MPSA, the company will provide the financing, technology, management and personnel for the mining project.

The approval of MPSA applications, however, is subject to qualifications and requirements set by the Philippine Mining Act of 1995.

US firm buys Alaska shares worth ₱511M

SCM BOND HOLDINGS, A MAJOR stockholder of Alaska Milk Corp., sold around P510.8 million worth of shares in the milk products maker to its affiliate, US-registered investment firm Jadestone Investments LLC.

The shares represented about 18 percent of SCM Bond's holdings in Alaska.

Both SCM Bond and Jadestone Investments are owned by the Uytengsu family who control Alaska.

The sale, which involved 170.84 million shares of Alaska priced at P2.99 a share, was completed at the stock market Monday.

Based on the INQUIRER's computations and data provided by Alaska officials, the shares sold represented roughly 18 percent of the company's 948.7 million common shares.

Jadestone said in a report to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its purchase was merely "for investment purposes."

Following the purchase, Jadestone has become the biggest stakeholder in Alaska, with its 49.99 percent stake.

Last June, it owned 31.9 percent.

On the other hand, SCM Holdings' interest in the company has been reduced to 5.99 percent as of yesterday. Last June, SCM owned 227.7 million shares, or 23.9 percent, of the milk company, Alaska's records with the PSE showed.

Alaska is setting aside $5 million for the expansion of its powdered milk capacity as it banks on increasing market share in the next few years.

This year however continues to be a tough year for the milk products producer, with net earnings expected to contract 15 percent in 2006 from P300.9 million in 2005 as it staves off price hikes for milk products, even as costs of raw materials continue to rise.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

kotra B2B e-TRADE EXPORT ROADSHOW

Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

1ST RP-KOREA CYBER BUSINESS MEET

HOTEL INTERCON MAKATI CITY • THURSDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2006 • 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

A. MEDICAL / PHARMA / HEALTH CARE EQUIPMENTS AND SUPPLIES		
	Daesung Maref Co. Ltd.	IPC Physiotherapy Device, Compression Massage for the Medical, Aesthetic, Home-Care, DVT / Lymph Edema Drainage System
	Infopia Co. Ltd.	Blood Glucose Measuring Devices & Blood Test Equipment System for GOT,GPT,CPK, T-Cholesterol, Triglycerides, Creatinine, Calcium,Uric Acid..
	Istech Inc.	DNA Chip Analysis Software System for Bio-Engineering, Chemical Pharmaceutical Industries
	JPI Co.	X-ray Grid and Automatic X-ray Film Processor, X-ray Accessories. Multimedia Medical Imager on film, paper, color..
	Mediana Co. Ltd	Patient Monitoring System, Vital Signs Monitor, Pulse Oximeter equipment Physical therapy and Massage equipments
	Meinntech Co. Ltd.	I.V. Flow Controller / Regulator, Roll Controller (for Ringer Solution)
	Seo Kwang Co. Ltd.	Sterilizer and Purifier Equipments, Temperature Controller, High-Voltage Transformer, Sterilizer for PCB and other products
B. CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENTS		
	Korea Hoist Co. Ltd.	Air Hoists, Air Balancer, Track Air Motors, Hoist Cranes
	LS Tech	Construction Lifts and Industrial Elevators with Radish power brakes
C. ENGINEERING AND INDUSTRIAL SUPPLIES		
	Daeyoun Co. Ltd.	Polyethylene Ball Valves, PE / EF Pipe Fittings for gas, etc.
	Essentech Co. Ltd.	Valves— LPG Cylinder Valve, Brass Valve , Ball Valve, Check Valve etc.
	Polytec Co. Ltd.	Poly-Ethylene Ball Valves for Gas and Liquid, etc.
	SMECO	Piston for Marine Engine, Generators, Refrigerator, Engine Parts for Major Engine Brands (Daihatsu, Niigata, Yanmar etc.)
D. ELECTRONICS & ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS		
	Shinhan Photonics Co. Ltd	Optical Fiber Cord/ Connector/ Coupler/ Adapter, Ferrule, LD/PD Pigtails, forTelecommunications,CATV, LAN, Access Networks, Device Termination
	Wookang Tech Ltd.	Automotive Headlights : HID, Halogen, LED Lamps
E. MACHINERIES AND EQUIPMENTS		
	Joy Engineering	Air Compressors : Oil – flooded Rotary Screw Compressor and parts
	Leader Sea Co. Ltd.	Marine Aerator and Feeder Equipments, Underwater Breathing Apparatus for divers, resorts, fish farms etc.
F. HARDWARE AND HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES		
	5M Tech Co.	Bathroom Accessories, Faucets, Door-handles, Locks, Hinges, Valves - Radiator, Gate, Ball, Bronze, Safety Valves, etc.
	Enputech	Hand-held UV Sterilizer against bacteria, virus, dust mite, SARS, etc., Portable or Stationary Anion Air Purifier
	Esencia Co. Ltd.	Toothbrush Sterilizer and Holder (individual or multiple)
	STworld Co. Ltd.	Doors and Accessories : Auto-sliding Doors, Manual revolving doors and Auto - Manual Swing Doors, etc.
G. OTHER PRODUCTS		
	Banseok Zeropa Co. Ltd.	Electromagnetic Wave Absorber for mobile phones & computer monitor, Health Balancing Wrist Watch, Bioceramic Refrigerator Deodorizer, Heat Energy-Saving Cooking Stone
	KOF Co. Ltd.	Environment-friendly Calcium Fertilizer

AN INVITATION TO PHILIPPINE IMPORTERS, DISTRIBUTORS AND BUYERS TO CYBER MEET WITH KOREAN SUPPLIERS ON A WIDE RANGE OF BUSINESS PROSPECTS

Please check your top two priority products and confirm your participation with Korea Trade Center on or before October 5.

Each Cyber Meeting will be one-on-one with an average of 1 hour 15 minutes per meeting.

Fax, email or contact:
Charlie Alveyra or Stephanie Obiles
Fax #s: 817-3369, 751-4358
Tel #s : 893-1183, 893-3244
Email : cyber.kotramanila@yahoo.com, charlie.kotramanila@yahoo.com.ph

ORGANIZED BY KOREA TRADE CENTER MANILA
IN COOPERATION WITH THE PHILIPPINE INTERNET COMMERCE SOCIETY AND INNOVE COMMUNICATIONS

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 3, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	7,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	40	40.5	39.5	40	3,050,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59	58.5	59	523,400
China Banking Corp.	680	680	675	675	780
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.41	0.42	0.4	0.41	2,280,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	70	70	67.5	67.5	781,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	41	41	40.5	41	1,313,000
Phil. Savings Bank	43	43	43	43	2,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	50	50	49.5	50	883,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45.5	45	45.5	9,900
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.15	4.6	4.15	4.5	2,168,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	30.5	30	30.5	15,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1620	1620	1610	1610	490
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2050	2050	2050	2050	530
Ivantage Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.44	1.48	6,384,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	50	50	49.5	50	1,611,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	51	51	50.5	51	1,034,800
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	19.75	19.5	19.5	56,900
Manila Electric Co. B	29.5	29.5	29	29	174,000
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9	9	8.8	8.8	6,999,000
Petron Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.05	4.05	1,395,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	120,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	490,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	194,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	1,000
Cen Azucar De Tarlac	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.5	22.75	22	22.75	149,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	35.5	35.5	35	35.5	529,600
Pancake House Inc.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	13,000
RFM Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	110,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.6	3.6	184,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65	64.5	65	50,400
San Miguel Corp. B	76.5	76.5	75.5	76	125,600
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	9,000
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19.25	18.5	19	4,085,900
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	3,130,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.88	1.92	1.88	1.92	4,597,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	6,726,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.46	1.5	1.46	1.46	840,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	4	4.05	4	4.05	1,199,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.61	0.63	0.59	0.6	95,410,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.13	2,300,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	465	465	457.5	460	306,690
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.2	5.3	5.2	5.3	332,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	10,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.08	2.1	2.08	2.1	277,000
APC Group Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	1,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.94	0.93	0.94	510,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	3	3	2.95	2.95	238,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	15,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	7,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	4,526,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.8	366,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	430,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.4	6.2	6.3	607,000
Keppel Holdings	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	20,000
Medco Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	600,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.22	1.24	1.1	1.18	1,993,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	10,500,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	800,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	560,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,200,000
SM Investments Corp.	250	252.5	249	252.5	274,250
South China Resources Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	290,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	37,000
Uniciol Res. & Holdings Co.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	3,690,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14	14	13.75	14	8,187,100
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	150,000
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	1,840,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1	1	0.96	0.96	200,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,100,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.65	2.8	2.65	2.8	533,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	49,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.27	0.28	0.26	0.26	8,900,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	40,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	8,030,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.26	1.08	1.24	4,490,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0575	0.0575	0.055	0.055	1,800,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.58	1.58	16,252,000
Golesco Land Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.1	0.1	1,070,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	18,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.28	5,000,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.7	0.76	0.7	0.73	8,480,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.84	1.88	20,246,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.2	3.25	755,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	200,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	2,090,000
SM Development Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	516,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.5	8.5	8.4	8.5	1,387,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	170,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	7,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.28	1.28	13,998,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1070	1070	1055	1055	53,650
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.6	4.6	599,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2245	2245	2210	2215	218,850
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	100,000
Imperial Res.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,500,000
Ionics Inc.	1.98	2.08	1.98	2.08	61,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	6,500,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.02	1.1	1	1.1	214,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.03	432,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.55	328,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	16.5	17	16.5	17	53,900
Lorenzo Shipping Corp	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	20,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	1,136,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2	2	1.98	2	16,944,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	100,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	850	850	850	850	100
iPeople Inc.	2.8	2.8	2.75	2.75	51,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.06	2.02	2.02	636,000
Paxys Inc.	11.25	11.75	11.25	11.75	1,209,600
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.3	2,536,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.5	6.6	6.3	6.3	1,339,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	61,500,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	8.1	8.1	7.9	8	1,170,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	40,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,760,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.27	400,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	599,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.027	0.025	0.026	170,500,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	745,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7	3,417,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19.5	19.5	18.75	19.25	284,900
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	1,220,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	420,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	1,500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	20,300,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	87,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1	1	0.99	1	394,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1	1	0.99	0.99	668,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.7	9.7	9.6	9.6	20,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,600
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	1,218,000

CURRENCIES

October 3, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.784806	1.000000	50.0040
Japan	Yen	0.006672	0.008501	0.4251
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480929	1.887000	94.3575
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100730	0.128350	6.4180
Switzerland	Franc	0.631330	0.804441	40.2253
Canada	Dollar	0.703736	0.896700	44.8386
Singapore	Dollar	0.495490	0.631353	31.5702
Australia	Dollar	0.586727	0.747608	37.3834
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.081880	2.652731	132.6472
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.209270	0.266652	13.3337
Brunei	Dollar	0.493930	0.629366	31.4708
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020878	0.026603	1.3303
UAE	Dirham	0.213686	0.272279	13.6150
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.274200	63.7151
Argentina	Peso	0.253164	0.322581	16.1303
Brazil	Real	0.362866	0.462364	23.1200
Denmark	Kroner	0.134116	0.170891	8.5452
India	Rupee	0.017143	0.021844	1.0923
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212857	0.271223	13.5622
Mexico	New Peso	0.071541	0.091158	4.5583
New Zealand	Dollar	0.514897	0.656082	32.8067
Norway	Kroner	0.119757	0.152595	7.6304
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012972	0.016529	0.8265
South Africa	Rand	0.101973	0.129934	6.4972
Korea	Won	0.000828	0.001055	0.0528
Sweden	Kroner	0.107092	0.136457	6.8234
Syria	Pound	0.015119	0.019264	0.9633
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023696	0.030193	1.5098
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000366	0.000466	0.0233

Last tents standing

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

IT LOOKS LIKE THE NBC TENT HAS ALL THE market to itself again, at least within the Fort, just like when it started the tent-for-hire industry in the metropolis six years ago.

Despite being the oldest among the industry's five, the NBC Tent miraculously survived 130 kph-plus of Typhoon "Milenyo" winds that, a few blocks down the road, blew into smithereens another but much newer tent, built by a tiangge group.

Over at the bayside area where the tents were exposed to Milenyo's full fury, the Metrobank Group's Le Pavillon and that of the Philippine Plaza's were reduced to tatters in a matter of minutes when the howler's Signal No. 3 winds slammed ashore.

Further inland and sheltered by the massive PICC building, the PICC tent, wonder of wonders, continued with a scheduled dog-show event; the PICC tent even enjoyed full air-conditioning from a back-up generator, even when steel billboards all over Metro Manila were already buckling down.

Credit for the structural integrity of the PICC Forum, as the tent is formally known, goes to former Public Works Minister Alfredo Juinio who oversaw the project as PICC consultant when the tent was being built in 2003 by another former public works secretary, Fiorello Estuar.

According to an industry estimate, the replacement cost for a 1,500-square-meter, PVC-engineered fabric membrane tent now runs to about P15 million.

The Philippine Plaza, we understand, has immediately placed an order for a replacement tent, which the contractor promised should be up and ready for business by Nov. 25, in time for the holiday rush.

Assuming that it rents out for only 10 days a month, at P195,000 a day as what the NBC Tent charges (the Philippine Plaza and PICC charge an identical rate of P180,000 for eight hours), the investment would have paid off in 77 days, or in just eight months.

Quite an attractive rate of return, indeed.

Porsche's counterpush

AMID the PR coup of BMW in having been named the official transport for this month's Asean Summit in Cebu, fellow ubercar maker Porsche is shipping in a total of 20 Carreras, Caymans and Cayennes for next week's invitation-only driving clinic in Clark.

Only 440 Porsche car owners and enthusiasts are being invited and individually scheduled for the Oct. 11-22 events, for a day-long driving clinic for all Porsche makes from German master drivers flown in for the occasion.

Money-go-round

• THE ROOFTOP structure that had been blown by Milenyo winds from the Aboitiz building in Legaspi Village was not the upper penthouse office of Endika Aboitiz but a gazebo-like appendage on the same floor.

The steel structure knocked down a electrical pole with a transformer as it came crashing down a back street, resulting in a power outage in LPL, PAL, Charter House, Pioneer and other nearby buildings that up to yesterday noon had not been restored.

• THE SKYCABLE service has not yet been restored in a number of Legaspi Village condos as of yesterday noon.

Heard through the grapevine

ABS-CBN newscaster Karen Davila has been publicly identified in another newspaper as the broadcaster being linked to a billionaire businessman.

The network itself is apparently conducting a quiet investigation to flush out the owner of a pre-paid Globe cell phone that had been sending out the broadcaster+billionaire text messages to various publications.

For a start, ABS-CBN might want to start snooping right in their own backyard.

(Email: cocktales@cocktales.biz)

'Sin' tax law fails to meet expectations

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE slightly missed its collection target for excise tax on cigarettes and alcohol in the first eight months of the year.

Government documents showed that the BIR collected P26.63 billion in so-called "sin" taxes from January to August, or 1.8-percent lower than the target of P27.11 billion.

The failure to hit the target was reflected in the collection performance for both tobacco and alcohol.

According to BIR figures, excise tax on tobacco hit P16.28 billion, or 1.47-percent lower than the goal of P16.52 billion. Excise tax on alcohol amounted to P10.35 billion, reflecting a 2.26-percent shortfall from the P10.59-billion target.

In August alone, excise tax collection on "sin" products amounted to P2.71 billion, or 22-percent lower than the target of P3.48 billion.

The failure of the BIR to meet the revenue-collection targets from the excise tax on cigarettes and alcohol has prompted Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag to direct revenue personnel to make an inquiry as to the reasons behind the relatively weak revenue generation performance of the "sin" tax law.

Buñag earlier said he would direct revenue personnel to explain the decline in excise tax collection despite the implementation of the Sin Tax Law in January last year.

This law is one of the fiscal reform measures undertaken by the Arroyo administration to address the government's budget deficit. It took effect last year and implemented a yearly increase in the excise tax rates until 2009.

The tax measure was expected to increase the BIR's tax collection by P7 billion in 2005. The revenue agency, however, collected less than half of that amount last year.

The BIR explained earlier that the law failed to deliver the expected revenues last year because cigarettes and alcohol manufacturers frontloaded their production immediately before the imposition of the tax measure. • The advanced production helped manufacturers delay the impact of the higher excise tax rates on their sales revenues.

RP gets $410M in loans ...

From page B1

assistance and toward a more programmable and streamlined approach to support national priority programs.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III said that the health loan was a "big boost to current efforts of the Department of Health to institute critical reforms in the health sector."

The third loan amounting to $100 million will be administered by Land Bank of the Philippines to provide financing to local government units (LGUs).

The aim is to help LGUs improve local public services and carry out strategic investments for infrastructure and social services.

This program will also finance revenue improvement and enhancement programs for LGUs, including fiscal and management improvements to ensure financial sustainability. It will also finance capacity building for participating LGUs and support to assist LGUs in project preparation and implementation.

"Local government units play a very important role in reducing poverty incidence in the Philippines. This World Bank loan will go a long way in enabling LGUs fulfill their mandate of managing their growth and development programs," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said.

The Department of Finance is extending loan guarantees for the Support for Strategic Local Development and Investment Program.

Peso surges to 49.88 to a dollar

From page B1

months in September. The sluggish factory output in the world's biggest economy bolstered speculation that the US Fed would not only end its monetary tightening but even start cutting interest rates soon.

"The dollar is weaker ... and if we look at the movement of currencies from the beginning of the year, all currencies have appreciated against the US dollar," Tetangco said.

But Tetangco maintained that the foreign exchange policy of the BSP was to basically allow market forces to determine the rate.

"The BSP's presence in the forex market is only to smoothen sharp fluctuations—what we want to do is minimize volatilities," Tetangco said.

The BSP chief noted that the overall confidence in the country's improving economic fundamentals was likewise supporting the local currency.

"Economic growth is continuing. Inflation is on a downtrend. The fiscal position of the national government is improving and BOP (balance of payment) continues to be in surplus," Tetangco said.

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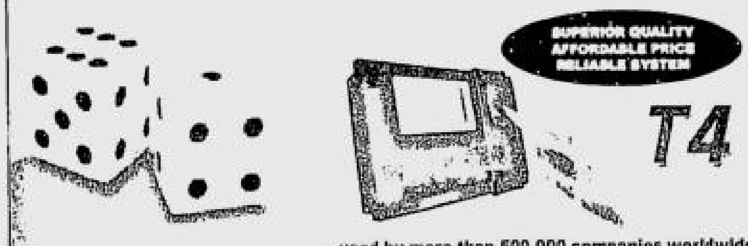

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RP, Turkey seek stronger economic relations

Officials working on creation of Joint Economic Commission

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TURKEY IS SEEKING STRONGER ECONOMIC relations with the Philippines in line with its efforts to expand its presence in the international community through trade with countries other than its relatively affluent co-members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Ankara (the Turkish seat of government) has been working with trade officials in Manila on the establishment of a Joint Economic Commission, a preparatory meeting for which was held here in July 2005.

Turkish officials had proposed hosting the first session of the Philippines-Turkey JEC this month or in November, with concurrent visit from a Philippine trade mission, but their counterparts had been slow to respond.

During the preparatory meeting, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, banking, products standardization, customs, energy, environment and forestry, health, small and medium enterprises, transportation and communication, postal services, and contracting and consultancy services.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs, the RP-Turkey JEC is a mechanism established under an economic and technical cooperation agreement that the two governments entered into in February 1999 during the state visit of then Turkish President Suleyman Demirel.

The JEC is envisioned to be at the ministerial level and will serve as the main venue for both countries for discussing economic issues of mutual concern.

For its part, Ankara hopes to encourage two-way trade missions and high-level exchanges that would hopefully bolster trade between the two countries—which in 2005 was valued at only $47 million.

Philippine Ambassador to Ankara Bahnarim A. Guinomla, who assumed office last May, said he had extended an invitation for Turkish businessmen to visit the Philippines when he presented his credentials to President Ahmet Necdet Sezer that month.

Guinomla said he told Sezer that Turkish businessmen could particularly to explore trade and investment opportunities in Mindanao and to help in the development of the region where most of Filipino Muslims reside.

On the private sector side, the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association of Turkey or Musiad is organizing a buying mission from the Philippines that would visit the 11th Musiad

International Trade Fair to be held next month in Istanbul.

According to the Embassy of Turkey, there have enlisted so far some 50 businessmen from Cebu-most of whom are engaged in the furniture making—who would participate in the mission.

While Turkey is known to most Filipinos as the new home of a beauty queen-actress married to a Turkish businessman, the country is visited more by Filipino tourists with deep pockets.

Still, Department of Foreign Affairs records show that there are 1,762 overseas Filipino Workers in in Turkey as of December 2005.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo witnesses the exchange of documents between Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and World Bank representative to the Philippines Joachim Von Amsberg after the signing of a $410-million World Bank loan for the Philippines *(story on Page B1)*. The signing, which was also witnessed by Health Secretary Francisco Duque was held at the Rizal Ceremonial Hall in Malacañang Palace. EDWIN BACASMAS

Additional VAT revenue hits ₱41.3B

By Michelle V. Remo

THE VALUE ADDED TAX REFORM law has generated P41.3 billion in additional revenue for the government in the first seven months of the year, exceeding the P37.95-billion target set for the period.

The seven-month performance also kept the government on track to meeting its full-year goal of collecting P75 billion in additional revenue from the VAT law, which expanded the coverage of the old VAT law and raised the rate from 10 percent to 12 percent. It also increased the corporate income tax rate from 32 to 35 percent.

Government data showed that of the additional revenue collected in the first seven months of the year, the biggest share of P30.9 billion was delivered by the Bureau of Customs, which set its VAT collection target for the period at only P29.9 billion.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue contributed another P10.4 billion, also higher than its target for the period of P8.1 billion.

The BIR imposes value-added tax on locally produced goods and rendered services, while the BOC charges VAT on imports.

The P41.3 billion in net VAT collection excludes the estimated revenues loss due to the implementation of several measures intended to mitigate the impact of the law on the consumers' purchasing power. It also excludes the amount of input VAT claims of taxpayers during the period.

Government data showed that the foregone revenues arising from the implementation of mitigating measures—including the reduction in the excise tax on petroleum products—reached P9.196 billion from January to August.

Input VAT claims during the eight-month period stood at P11.973 billion.

Despite Naia-3 issue, German investors still upbeat on RP

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE PHILIPPINES REMAINS AN ATTRACTIVE investment site for German businessmen despite the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia-3) terminal 3 controversy, Ambassador Axel Weishaupt said in an interview.

Weishaupt said the business process outsourcing (BPO) and manufacturing industries were drawing the most interest from investors.

While he acknowledged that the Naia-3 issue had "saddened" the business community in general, he said German businesses were still very much interested in the Philippines, especially in the light of the $60 million (P3 billion) partial compensation to Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), the project contractor which was 30-percent owned by German firm Fraport.

"It is a positive first step," Weishaupt said.

Fraport announced late last month that it had already received $29 million out of the initial $60-million compensation.

The amount would be subtracted from a yet-to-be determined liabilities of Piatco to Fraport. The German company said the amount involved would be determined by independent experts.

"This is a first success in our efforts to get appropriate compensation for our investment in the Philippines," Fraport chair Wilhelm Bender said in a statement posted on the company website.

The Naia-3 case aside, German investors remained keen on doing business in the country, particularly in the areas of BPO and manufacturing. Among the biggest German firms in the country are Siemens and Teletek.

The electronics and medical equipment manufacturing sectors are also drawing strong interest from German investors.

The country's tourism industry also benefits from German travelers.

Weishaupt said thousands of German businessmen and professionals visit the Philippines yearly for business or leisure.

Political winds buffet . . .

From page B1

At no time in history has this been as true as today.

Over the past 10 years, the outdoor advertising industry—which comes mainly in the form of giant billboards—has growth exponentially. Llave said that there were now "close to 2,500 billboards" in Metro Manila alone, all urging commuters, passers-by and bystanders to buy something.

For last year, the OAAP head estimated that the billboard industry generated at least P2 billion in revenues as more and more firms shifted their advertising budgets from traditional media to outdoor ads.

"I believe this figure is even on the conservative side," he said, explaining that there were many billboard firms which operated outside the ambit of the industry organization and did not report their earnings or activities.

"The members of the OAAP make up only about a third of the total number of billboard companies doing business in Metro Manila," Llave said.

Herein lies the problem.

Llave, who also runs a billboard firm called The Fourth Dimension, said members of the OAAP adhered to a strict code of ethics, which puts the safety of the public above the individual firms' drive for profits.

"Public safety will always be the primary concern in the conduct of our business," according to Section 2 of the group's Code of Ethics, which has been in force since 2001. "We shall therefore ensure that our structures and displays exceed those provided for by law, and to faithfully conduct regular maintenance checks on all our structures so that they remain structurally sound."

Llave said it was not uncommon for OAAP-member firms to turn down requests by even the highest-paying advertisers to set up billboards in certain locations, especially if these were deemed to be in violation of national or local laws.

"The problem, however, is that that advertiser will often just find another billboard operator which is not an OAAP member, and which will agree to set up a billboard according to [the advertiser's] request," he explained.

Attractive option

Advertisers can scarcely be blamed, however, for their interest in the medium, given the advantages outdoor ads offer compared to traditional platforms like television, radio or print media.

"Outdoor ads are very cost effective for users," said Globe Telecoms Inc. public relations head Jones T. Campos.. "They are there for everyone to see 24 hours a day. *Babad ka talaga* (Exposure is really maximized)."

Ad space on large billboards are rented out for an average of P200,000 a month.

"Compare that to around P150,000 for a full-page ad for one day in a newspaper, or more than that for a single 30-second commercial on television," he said.

On top of this, the cost of manufacturing a large photograph on a 40- by 60-foot tarpaulin canvass rarely exceeded P50,000 nowadays due to rising competition.

"You can really see why it's attractive," he said.

Campos, who is also a director of the Advertising Board of the Philippines, said he believed that the way forward for the industry was self-regulation rather than a complete clampdown as advocated by some lawmakers.

"Even abroad, billboards are regulated," he said. "It just so happened that the local industry flourished ahead of the regulatory regime."

OAAP's Llave could only agree, adding that regulation would help put order to an industry where steel frames can cost anywhere from P300,000 to P5 million to set up.

"We would welcome standards," he said. "We're willing to cooperate."

Like most businessmen, however, he preferred that the government kept its hands off the industry.

"We want to keep it efficient and corruption-free," he said.

BSP seen cutting policy rates

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS MAY cut its overnight borrowing rates by as much as 50 basis points before the end of this year and further by 75 basis points next year given a decelerating domestic inflation, British bank HSBC projected.

In HSBC's latest global research for the fourth quarter, the bank projected that the BSP's overnight borrowing rate could ease from 7.5 percent at present to 7 percent by the end of the year.

The rate reduction is seen to continue next year with a 25-percentage point rate cut in each quarter starting in the second quarter, bringing down the rates to 6.25 percent by the end of 2007.

"Inflation has decelerated on the back of falling agricultural prices and a stronger peso. It dropped to 6.3 percent year-on-year in August, with the core rate down to 5.3 percent year-on-year," the HSBC global research said.

For this year, HSBC sees Philippine inflation averaging at 7 percent, as against 7.6 percent last year. The inflation rate is seen to further ease to an average of 5.9 percent next year and 5 percent in 2008.

"While these numbers provide some room for the central bank to cut rates in the fourth quarter of 2006, there is lingering concern that with incomplete sterilization, the continuing reserves buildup is resulting in excessive liquidity," it noted.

Sterilization refers to the change in the country's foreign reserves less the change in base money as a percentage of gross domestic product. In the Philippine case, sterilization refers to the buying of excess dollars from the open market by the BSP and then mopping up the peso liquidity arising from the dollar purchases.

HSBC noted that the domestic financial system was still very liquid.

"However, bank lending to the private sector continues to languish. It is therefore likely that extra liquidity has helped to compress yields on government securities," the bank said.

25-yr T-bond rate down to 9.37%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE RATE FOR THE 25-YEAR TREASURY bond dropped by over a percentage point yesterday, as banks swamped the government securities auction.

The 25-year T-bond fetched 9.375 percent, or 187.5 basis points lower than the 11.25 percent recorded in last January's auction.

The long-term government securities were over-subscribed, generating P18.2 billion worth of bids as against the offering of only P8 billion.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted P8 billion worth of bids, thus raising in full its programmed borrowing from the T-bond auction yesterday.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the drop in the rate was an indication that investors were confident in the long-term prospects of the government's fiscal condition. Cruz said the 25-year bond was gathering substantial interest from investors trading in the secondary market.

He said the declining interest rate on government securities issued locally was consistent with the tightening of spreads on the country's sovereign bonds in the international market.

Fiscal authorities expect the government's budget deficit to be much lower than the P125-billion ceiling set for 2006. The rosy projection is based on the tight spending and growth in revenue collection recorded in the previous months.

The budget deficit last year stood at P146.8 billion. Despite the market's huge appetite for the 25-year bonds, Cruz said, the government was not inclined to issue retail treasury bonds (RTBs) given its improving fiscal condition.

The BTr said the issuance of the 25-year bonds formed part of the government's liability management strategy. He said long-term bonds would extend the average maturity of the government's liabilities and, therefore, give it more flexibility in servicing its maturing obligations.

RTBs, unlike regular bonds, are available even to small investors with the minimum investment requirement only at P5,000.

Mirant sale deal to contain clause on separation pay

MIRANT WILL MAKE ITS SEPARATION POLICY of paying 2.5 months for every year of service a part of the agreement on the sale of the company's assets in the country, said Mirant Philippines chair and president Jose P. Leviste Jr.

"This is an ironclad protection for our more than 1,000 employees. This is a rich package because the 2.5-month package is based on 14 months plus short-term incentives plus P1,200 in monthly rice allowance multiplied by 12 months," he said.

Leviste said the package was deemed generous considering that in most cases, such packages were based on one month's pay.

He said practice and policy were equally binding in law. "But our employees feel they have better legal protection if it is both written and practiced. So we are giving it to them. And we are going the extra mile by making this part of the sale agreement."

Mirant Asia-Pacific Ltd., the Hong Kong-based mother company of the Pagbilao and Sual plants, is being sold by Mirant Corp. of the US as part of a global divestment plan.

Leviste announced the new policy to Pagbilao and Sual employees last week and to the Manila head office employees this week.

PNOC to impose stricter rules on energy deals

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL CO. IS COMING out with stricter rules in the selection of prospective joint venture partners for the exploration and development of the country's energy resources. This forms part of efforts to rid the sector of fly-by-night and bogus exploration companies, and to ensure that only legitimate entities are allowed to take part in PNOC's energy development activities.

PNOC president and CEO Eduardo Mañalac said the company would publish the new set of guidelines this week and that he would meet with prospective local and international investors to present and explain the said rules.

Mañalac said PNOC would be stricter particularly on the technological and financial capabilities of prospective entrants into the exploration and energy development sector.

"We will ensure that only the most technically and financially qualified parties are allowed to take part," Mañalac said. Global track record will be an important factor, he added.

He said the company would require interested parties to provide proof that they have seriously undertaken actual petroleum exploration and development projects based on a validated track record of several years.

"We cannot waste our time with mere traders posing as exploration firms," he added.

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

DA taps PNP to ensure quick veggie delivery to Metro Manila

Gov't moves to ease escalating prices

By Christine A. Gaylican

TYPHOON Milenyo has disrupted the supply of vegetables to Metro Manila and affected provinces, causing prices to soar by as much as P3 a kilo in the wet markets. TOOTS SOBERANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE HAS asked the Philippine National Police to help speed up the delivery of vegetables from Baguio to Metro Manila and other provinces affected by typhoon "Milenyo."

Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban said in an interview that delivery trucks carrying 470 tons of fresh vegetables left yesterday from the vegetable producing town of La Trinidad, Benguet to fill the demand in Metro Manila.

Panganiban said the delivery of more vegetables to Metro Manila would stabilize prices of fresh produce, which went up following the typhoon.

He said the move to tap the PNP's help was prompted by reports that traders and truckers from Luzon find it difficult to pass the C-3 highway—which runs from Caloocan to Navotas—because of the PNP's checkpoints.

He said former PNP chief Arturo Lomibao, now administrator of the National Irrigation Administration (NIA), acted on a previous request to assist Benguet farmers, traders and truckers.

"With the assistance of General Lomibao, we were able to ask the PNP now under General Oscar Calderon to assist our farmers," Panganiban said.

Enough supply in Metro Manila will prevent possible exploitation of the temporary shortage of vegetables by some traders, Panganiban said.

Prices of vegetables are now up by an average of P3 to P5 a kilo in wet markets in Manila and Quezon City, according to a recent survey on primary commodities done by the Bureau of Agriculture Statistics.

Panganiban added that five truckloads of vegetables dispatched from Batangas and Cavite would also help augment Metro Manila's supply.

This is in addition to vegetables airlifted from Cagayan de Oro and Bukidnon and ferried from Oriental Mindoro.

Powerful typhoon Milenyo disrupted the delivery of these commodities to Manila from northern Luzon, Panganiban said.

The DA reported that Milenyo's damage to agriculture and fisheries has risen to P513 million, primarily affecting Regions 3, 4-A, 4-B, 5, 6 and 8, particularly the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Marinduque, Occidental Mindoro, Albay, Camarines Sur, Northern Samar and Leyte.

Respect contracts, PCCI head urges gov't

NAGA CITY—PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Donald Dee has urged the government to respect the sanctity of negotiated contracts to attract more investments.

The special envoy for international trade said in a recent talk here that while the economy had been improving, there was much room for improvement in the area of contracts.

He cited the Supreme Court's decision to void the contract concerning terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"As a businessman, I would have expected [the government] to cure the content of the provisions not favorable to the nation, rather than abrogate it," Dee said here before members of the Camarines Sur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CSCCI).

Dee also said the Philippines also lagged in terms of global competitiveness, ranking 77th among 121 countries covered by the survey.

He cited the serious shortage of infrastructure as well as the unsatisfactory performance of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as among the reasons for the low ranking.

"SMEs are not in good business because consumers are not buying Philippine-made products. Under the World Trade Organization, the consumers have lots of choices," he said.

Dee explained that this was why the Social Weather Station came out with a survey that said that business was bad these days.

He also said the Philippines needed a workforce that can cater to high-end clients, which will require the government to institute skills training and language education for the workers.

Dee likewise called for unity in the business sector to help develop the economy. *Juan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

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WHEN IMAGING MATTERS

Boracay resort owners flock to E. Samar's Calicoan Island

By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A NUMBER OF HOTEL and resort owners from Boracay Island have expressed plans to invest in Calicoan Island, which has been identified as a tourism growth center in Eastern Visayas.

Calicoan, which is part of the town of Guiuan in Eastern Samar, has been attracting tourists and investors mainly because of its white sand beaches facing Leyte Gulf and potential as a top-class surfing destination.

The development of Calicoan Island has been included in the government's priority tourism projects under the Central Philippines medium-term public investment program for 2007-2010.

Victor Domingo, presidential assistant for Eastern Visayas, said that some investors from Boracay have gone to Calicoan Island twice and "they liked what they saw."

"They would like to establish a Boracay in Calicoan. They would call this the 'Boracay in the Pacific,'" he added.

According to Domingo, these hotel and resort owners from Boracay have invested in Palawan and that they now want to offer their clients abroad a "three-in-one" package covering Boracay, Palawan and Calicoan.

Since its discovery as a "surfers' paradise," Calicoan has been attracting local and foreign surfing enthusiasts, Domingo said.

Early in October last year, Calicoan had its first surfing competition, participated in by Filipinos and foreigners.

Dubbed the Eastern Samar Surfing Crown, the competition last year was the 3rd leg of the Philippine Surfing Circuit and sponsored jointly by the Department of Tourism regional office here, the provincial government of Eastern Samar, the municipal government of Guiuan and the Philippine Surfing Federation (PSF).

Tourism regional director Karen Tiopes said that in the third week of October, a similar surfing competition sponsored by the same groups would be held in Calicoan Island.

The other side of Calicoan facing the Leyte Gulf, on the other hand, is suitable for swimming, boating and snorkeling, just like Boracay.

Domingo said another advantage of Calicoan is that it is near an old airport, which could be rehabilitated once demand picks up.

He was referring to the Guiuan airfield, which was constructed by the American naval and army engineering battalions late in 1944 and was used by US bombers during World War II.

The airport, which has a 2.8-kilometer runway, is just five to 10 minutes away from Calicoan.

The medium-term public investment program identified the improvement of the Guiuan airport and the construction of the Guiuan-Calicoan road as among the priority projects.

According to Domingo, the rehabilitation of the Guiuan airport would cost around P25 million.

The Department of Budget and Management has allotted P10 million this year for the rehabilitation of the Guiuan airport, he said.

Guiuan has a land area of 175.49 sq. km. and a population of 38,694 (2000 census).

Located near the Philippine Deep, Guiuan is rich in marine resources, such as deep sea fish, abalone, golden cowries and lobsters.

It is 109 km south of the provincial capital of Borongan and 154 km away from Tacloban City, the regional capital of Eastern Visayas.

Guiuan also offers other tourist attractions, like its centuries-old Catholic church, the pilgrimage site at Sulangan Island, the crystal clear water and white beach of Suluan Island, the historic island of Homonhon where Magellan first set foot on March 16, 1521, and the remnants of the biggest US naval base in the country in 1944-1945.

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Dolefil workers go back to work; strike aborted

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
Inquirer Mindanao

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Pineapple producer Dole Philippines (Dolefil) has resumed operations after its workers reported back to work.

The workers went back to work after the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) assumed jurisdiction over the dispute between Dolefil and its labor union.

Lawyer Tom Falgui, one of the legal consultants of Dolefil, told the INQUIRER that the government assumed jurisdiction over the dispute last week.

Falgui said this developed after the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) had failed to break the deadlock on collective bargaining agreement (CBA) between Dolefil management and the labor union.

The company temporarily shut down its operation last month after its workers threatened to stage a strike following the collapse of CBA talks.

Dole's labor union, which is affiliated with the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno, has been demanding additional benefits, such as a wage increase.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said the government was taking over the dispute because "...the company (Dolefil) is engaged in an industry indispensable to national interest."

He said Dole's closure would result in the loss of income of affected workers and loss of revenue for the company and the government.

Brion has given both parties seven days to submit their position papers.

He said these would be used to resolve the labor-management row.

Joe Teruel, chair of Dolefil's labor union, said they would abide by Brion's order.

He said that as soon as they received the order, union members removed placards and streamers displayed outside the company premises and reported back to work.

Dolefil has been operating in South Cotabato for 43 years. It is the biggest foreign investment in the region, employing about 6,000 regular workers.

About 95 percent of Dolefil's produce are marketed abroad.

New capital requirements shake up insurance firms

Group says Insurance Commission's order 'unreasonable'

By Michelle V. Remo

LIFE INSURANCE COMPANIES HAVE URGED the Department of Finance to withdraw its latest directive raising their capitalization requirement every year over the medium term.

Philippine Life Insurance Association (PLIA) wrote to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, asking him to reconsider the implementation of Department Order No. 27-26 recently issued by the Insurance Commission, an attached agency of the DOF.

PLIA said that the capitalization requirements stated in the department order were unreasonable and were too high for many of its members to meet.

It said the need to better protect policyholders would not be served by merely increasing the capitalization requirement.

The Insurance Commission, upon securing the DOF's approval, said it had issued the department order to better secure holders of insurance policies and set the domestic insurance industry to be at par with its counterparts in neighboring countries.

The department order states that by Dec. 31, 2007, the capitalization requirement of Filipino-owned life and nonlife insurance firms will be increased from the current P50 million to P75 million. The amount will be increased each year until it reaches P250 million by December 2011.

Higher capitalization requirements will be imposed on insurance firms with foreign equity.

Peter Coyiuto, president of PLIA, clarified that the life insurance sector was not against the concept of increasing capitalization per se. What the industry will agree to is a "fair" system of improving liquidity, he added.

"We are not saying we don't want to put in more capital," Coyuito yesterday told reporters. "We want to do it but through the risk-based capitalization approach, which we think is fair."

Coyuito said PLIA is amenable to risk-based capitalization and a one-time increase of capitalization requirement to P100 million.

Under the risk-based approach, an insurance firm's capitalization requirement is computed based on the amount of risks it covers. Firms with lower risks coverage are required a lower amount of capitalization, while larger companies are directed to maintain higher capitalization.

Coyuito said that in enhancing capitalization of the insurance sector, it would be better to use the risk-based approach.

The risk-based approach would not pose a threat to the insurance industry's capability to meet the capitalization requirement.

Bobby Madrid, president of Pru Life, said the yearly hike in capitalization would add to the problem of what the industry calls "heavy taxation," which makes insurance products in the Philippines more expensive and therefore less competitive than those offered in other countries.

He noted that only 5 percent of Filipinos are covered by life insurance, compared with the 90 percent of the population in Japan, and at least 70 percent of the population in the United States.

Members of the group said that they would meet with the finance chief next week to persuade him to consider withdrawing the order.

Three firms follow through on Transco bid

By Abigail L. Ho

FROM THE ORIGINAL 12, ONLY THREE BIDders have submitted to the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) their pre-qualification documents for the 25-year National Transmission Corp. (Transco) concession.

PSALM declined to name the three parties that submitted their pre-qualification requirements, citing confidentiality agreements.

Energy Secretary and PSALM vice chair Raphael Lotilla said PSALM's stringent requirements for the privatization process might have prompted other interested investors to join forces, and getting only three pre-qualification document submissions did not mean that the other nine potential investors had dropped out of the race.

"The groups that had earlier expressed interest could regroup or form groups among themselves," Lotilla explained.

"Bidding for the Transco concession requires a huge investment and a high level of technical expertise. The (stringent) requirements may have prompted some of them to (band together)," he added.

PSALM has set Nov. 7 as the deadline for submission of Transco concession bids.

Only firms that will hurdle the pre-qualification process will be allowed to submit their technical and financial proposals on that date.

To pre-qualify, a potential bidder should have a member or affiliate with a net asset value or market capitalization of at least $500 million.

They also have to have a member or affiliate "with sufficient experience in operating and maintaining electricity transmission systems comparable to that of the Philippines, with at least 6,000 circuit kilometers and a minimum 5,000 megawatts peak demand and a voltage level of 115 kilovolts (kV) to 230 kV," according to PSALM.

For interested foreign firms, they have to enter into partnerships with Filipino entities to enable them to comply with the 60-40 equity rule under the Constitution.

These potential foreign investors should have a net asset value or market capitalization of at least $175 million, and their Filipino partners should have at least $300 million.

Lotilla added that having only three consortia submit pre-qualification documents for the Transco bidding process had nothing to do with the recent change in leadership at Psalm.

Philippine National Construction Corp. chair Arthur Aguilar last week took over the Transco leadership, taking the reins from former president and chief executive Alan Ortiz.

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SCHEDULE OF SEMINARS & SPECIAL EVENTS (as of September 30, 2006)

OCTOBER 5, 2006 (Thursday)

Seminars *(Venue: Hall B, WTCMM):*

1:00pm - 5:30pm — **Le Club - French Chamber of Commerce** *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
1:00 - 1:45 — **Opening Remarks** *by:* Economic Counsellor of French Embassy
Presentation of the French Pavilion 2006 *by:* Le Club - FCC
1:45 - 2:30 — **Why Save and Store Water? How? LABARONNE CITAF's Solutions** *by:* Labaronne Citaf
2:30 - 3:15 — **How Can Prefabricated Buildings Improve Your Farming Efficiency** *by:* Le Triangle/C-Lines
3:15 - 3:30 — **First European Livestock Show** *by:* SPACE
3:30 - 4:15 — **Crop Protection "citrole and herbidown"** *by:* TOTAL (Philippines) Corp.
4:15 - 5:00 — **M-tox: A New Wave of Toxin Binder Using Nanotechnology** *by:* OLMIX
1:00pm - 3:00pm — **Updates on PED / Gamefowl Conditioning / Sow-Piglet Chain Feeding Program** *by:* Univet *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
3:30pm - 5:30pm — **The Reality of Salmonella Control: Treatment and Prevention / Phytogenic Feed Additives - The Performance of Nature for Profitable Poultry Production** *by:* Agrimate *(Seminar Rm. 2)*

Special Events *(Venue: Lobby, WTCMM):*

1:00pm - 2:00pm — **MEGArantisadong Sarap** *by:* Mega Sardines
2:30pm - 4:00pm — **Product Launching - Doggiessential, Electrogen Plus, Pigrolac-Mama Pro** *by:* Univet
4:00pm - 5:00pm — **Product Launching** *by:* Cargill Animal Health

OCTOBER 6, 2006 (Friday)

Seminars *(Venue: Hall B, WTCMM):*

10:30am - 12:30pm — • **Latest Development on Modern Housing System for Layers, Pullets, etc.** • **2006 and Beyond: The Most Promising and Economical Broiler and Layer Cage System** *by:* Pigpro/JPE (Jansen Poultry Equipment) *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
Philsurin's Variety Improvement Program / Sugarcane Variety Improvement Through Regional Germplasm & Technology Sharing *by:* Philippine Sugar Research Institute Foundation *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
1:00pm - 3:30pm — **Le Club - French Chamber of Commerce** *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
1:00 - 1:45 — **The Company Vins Descombe, Who We Are, Where We Are, Our Product Range, Production Capacity, Our Export Projects** *by:* Vins Descombe
1:45 - 2:30 — **Wine Making, A Tradition in France** *by:* Le Cellier-Flee Des Lois
2:30 - 3:15 — **Role of Ecosanitizer in Pig Production** *by:* GJP Animal Health Corp. - OLMIX Representative
1:00pm - 3:00pm — **Implication of the Complex Genetics of Sugarcane in Breeding Efforts Towards its Improvements / Applications of Molecular Markers in the Sugarcane Breeding Program of Philsurin** *by:* Philippine Sugar Research Institute Foundation *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
3:30pm - 5:30pm — **Virgin Coconut Oil Soap** *by:* Technology & Livelihood Resource Center *(Seminar Rm. 1)*

Special Events *(Venue: Lobby, WTCMM):*

10:00am - 10:30am — **Parade of Mascots** *by:* San Miguel Foods, Inc.
10:30am - 12:00pm — **Bingo Bonanza** *by:* B-Meg
1:30pm - 2:00pm — **Parade of Mascots** *by:* San Miguel Foods, Inc.
2:00pm - 4:00pm — **Cooking Demonstration** *by:* Poultry/MFC
4:00pm - 6:00pm — **Videoke Challenge** *by:* VMPF

OCTOBER 7, 2006 (Saturday)

Seminars *(Venue: Hall B, WTCMM):*

10:30am - 12:30pm — **Organic Genes: Starting the Organic Farm** *by:* Organic Producers Trade Association *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
Bt Corn: Minimizing Mycotoxin Contamination in Animal Feeds *by:* Monsanto Phils. *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
1:00pm - 3:00pm — **1) Goat Husbandry 2) Diseases of the Goat 3) The Economics of Goat Raising** *by:* Federation of Goat & Sheep Producers & Associations of the Phils. *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
Trends in Tilapia Farming *by:* BFAR National Freshwater Fisheries Technology Development Center *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
Economic Viability of Carps in Polyculture Fish Farming Systems *by:* BFAR NIFTC *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
3:30pm - 5:30pm — **Modernizing Philippine Extension System Through Information Communication Technology (ICT)** *by:* Open Academy Philippine Agriculture - PhilRice *(Seminar Rm. 1)*
Opportunities for LGU Supported Backyard Aquarium Fish Raising *by:* BFAR Region IV-A Project Collaborator *(Seminar Rm. 2)*
Business Opportunities in Mariculture Parks *by:* BFAR Central Office *(Seminar Rm. 2)*

Special Events *(Venue: Lobby, WTCMM):*

10:30am - 12:00pm — **Agri Kapihan Forum** *by:* Agri-Aqua Network Int'l.
1:00pm - 2:00pm — **Cooking Demonstration** *by:* Organic Producers Trade Association
2:00pm - 3:00pm — **Cooking Demonstration** *by:* Bureau of Animal Industry

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Special Participation by: Le Club French Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines; Netherlands Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality; Monsanto Phils., Inc.

Sponsored by: UNIVET, PIGROLAC, San Miguel Foods Inc.

For inquiries, please contact the organizer:
FOUNDATION FOR RESOURCE LINKAGE AND DEVELOPMENT, INC. S-122, Building 1, Mangosteen Road, FTI Complex, Taguig City, Philippines
Tels. +63 2 8384852, 8384605, 8384549, 8384491 Fax Nos. +63 2 8384573, 8384854 Email: frld@pldtdsl.net

Entrance and Seminars are free

Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations and Maintenance
TransCo

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects/undertakings:

Proj. No.	Contract Code/Title	Location	Duration	Approved Budget for the Contract	Source of Budget	License and Registration Particulars Issued by PCAB
1.	Trans-06-CHWSN-EG-31 Construction of Hazardous Waste Storage at Naga Substation	Naga, Camarines Sur	40 days	Php 760,583.56	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)	At least – D & C, Gen. Building At least – Small B, Building and Industrial Plant
2.	Trans-06-CHWSL-EG-32 Construction of Hazardous Waste Storage at Labo Substation	Labo, Camarines Norte	40 days	Php 757,956.04	Internal Cash Generation (ICG)	At least – D & C, Gen. Building At least – Small B, Building and Industrial Plant

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Php1,000.00* for each project. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. Bidders should have completed a similar contract involving supply of all labor, materials and supervision necessary for the construction of steel structures. The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis.

The schedule of activities for the above projects undertakings are listed as follows:

Activities	Date and Time	Venue
1. Issuance of Eligibility Guidelines	October 5-17, 2006 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.	Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
2. Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Documents	October 24, 2006 1:00 P.M. – Proj. 1 2:30 P.M. – Proj. 2	Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
3. Eligibility Screening	October 24, 2006 1:30 P.M. – Proj. 1 3:00 P.M. – Proj. 2	OAVP Conference Room B
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 26- 31, 2006 8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.	Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
5. Deadline for Submission of Bid Documents	November 7, 2006 9:00 A.M.– Proj. 1 10:00 A.M.– Proj. 2	Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
6. Opening of Bids	November 7, 2006 9:30 A.M. – Proj. 1 10:30 A.M. – Proj. 2	OAVP Conference Room B

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Php 1,000.00* for each project.

All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R. A. 9184. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation – South Luzon Operations & Maintenance
Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)
San Vicente Biñan, Laguna 4024
Mr. Ruben G. Castuera – BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4576 to78 local 4086; 4094; 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph.

(SGD). RUBEN G. CASTUERA
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Oct. 4, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
IBM DAKSH BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 30/F, PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave. Makati City	Ankit Poothia	Team Leader - Workflow
IBM DAKSH BUSINESS PROCESS SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 30/F, PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Ave. Makati City	Sonia Katoch	Sr. Quality Specialist
OSRP, LLC 22nd Level EDSA Central Pavilion Greenfield District, Mandaluyong City	Sean Lefebvre	General Manager
COLGATE PALMOLIVE PHILIPPINES, INC. 1049 Jose Rizal Ave., Makati City	Alejandro Roberto Navas Viteri	Sales Director
IWEBMASTERS.COM, INC. Unit 807 Antel 2000 Corporate Offices 121 Valero St., Brgy. Bel-Air Salcedo Village, Makati City	Ashwin Umapathy Sokke	Marketing Manager
TONINO CORP. 605 Madrid St., San Nicolas, Manila	Lianyu Zeng	Marketing Manager
REAL MARIS RESORT & HOTEL, INC. Unit 2908 Aslawealth Tower Leveriza, Pasay City	Eyun Kyung Sin	Marketing Manager for Southeast Asia
GENPACT SERVICES LLC Northgate Cyberzone, Filinvest Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Monisha Asthana Raut	Employee Relations Manager
HAEPI INT'L.-EDU FOUNDATION INC. Unit 1407 Landsdale Tower Condo No. 86 Mother Ignacia St. Quezon City	Me Hee Lee (w/o Kim)	Liaison Officer
REFAST – 888 TRADERS, INC. Rm. 208 STP Bldg., #381 Marquina cor. Dasmariñas Sts., Binondo, Manila	Liyang Chen	Technical Consultant
SONY PHILIPPINES, INCORPORATED 8/F Net Square Bldg., 3rd Avenue cor. 28th St., Crescent Park West Bonifacio, Global City, Taguig	Toshiya Kagita	Vice President

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Oct. 4, 2006)

JOB Market

Get a chance to work abroad in this year's
Inquirer Job Market Overseas Employment Expo
on October 23 and 24
at the SM Mall of Asia Music Hall.

INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for sale through public bidding, on an "*as-is-where-is*" basis and as one whole lot, the following National Government (NG) / National Power Corporation (NPC) property:

DESCRIPTION	BASE PRICE
A parcel of land with an area of 1,378 square meters located at Kamagong Street corner Ayala Avenue Extension, Makati City	P 55,120,000.00

Sealed bids will be received on Thursday, October 19, 2006 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and immediately thereafter, the bids shall be opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P2,000.00.

In the event that the public bidding becomes a failure, the PMO reserves the right to accept proposals for the subject assets.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Matthew R. de Guzman of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 817-6331 or 818-4733.

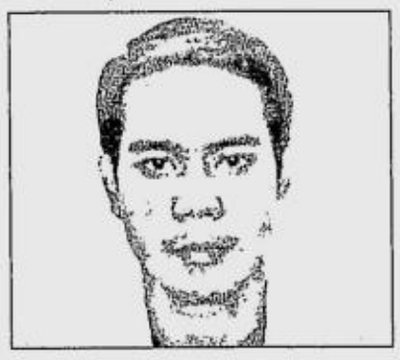
Privatization and Management Office
104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Fax (632) 818-0906 / 818-4591

(PDI – October 3, 4 & 5, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

360° M M SERVICES, INC.

1754 Nicanor Garcia St., Santiago Village, Makati City
DOLE PRPA LICENSE NO. M-06-00-274
SEC REG. NO. CS200612620 TIN 006-346-333-000
Telephone No. 899-9355



TIRSO S. BASILIO
Authorized Representative

THIS PUBLICATION IS REQUIRED BY
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT (DOLE)

(PDI–Oct 4, 2006)

Republika ng Pilipinas
Republic of the Philippines
Kagawaran ng Tanggulang Pambansa
Department of National Defense

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(DND-Proper Procurement of Equipment for CY 2006)

I. The Department of National Defense, through DND-Proper Bid and Awards Committee, invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects:

Re-bidding for Various Equipments:

Name of Project	Description	Approved Budget for Contract (ABC)
A. Office Equipment	Supply and Delivery of Assorted Office Equipment for OSND	PhP 1,971,000.00
B. Furniture Equipment	Supply and Delivery of Assorted Furniture Equipment for OSND	2,469,300.00
C. IT Equipment	Supply and Delivery of Assorted IT Equipment for OSND	2,260,000.00
D. Multi Media Equipment	Supply and Delivery of Multi Media Equipment for OSND	831,000.00
	TOTAL	Php 7,531,300.00

II. The schedule of activities are as follows:

ACTIVITIES	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Issuance of Bid Documents	Procurement Branch, OAS Bldg. DND	04 October 2006 to 26 October 2006	9:00 AM – 5.00 PM
Pre-Bid Conference	OASA Old Conference Room, Basement, DND Bldg	16 October 2006	9:30 AM
Deadline for Submission / Opening of Bids	OASA Old Conference Room, Basement, DND Bldg	27 October 2006	9:30 AM
Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. 9184 dated 10 January 2003		
Post-Qualification			
Issuance of Notice of Award			

III. Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable amount as indicated below to the DND-Proper BAC Secretariat, Procurement Branch, Office of Administrative Services, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Tel. No. 911-8118:

PROJECT	COST OF BIDDING DOCUMENTS
A. Office Equipment	Php 1,900.00
B. Furniture Equipment	2,400.00
C. IT Equipment	2,200.00
D. Multi Media Equipment	800.00

IV. The eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part-A (IRR-A).

V. To facilitate eligibility checking, manufacturers and/or suppliers who wish to participate in the public bidding may apply for registration with the DND-Proper BAC Secretariat at least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled submission and opening of bids for the procurement projects they wish to participate.

VI. The OSND assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

VII. The OSND reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formality and award the Contract to the bidder whose proposal is the most advantageous to the government as evaluated by the DND-Proper Bids and Awards Committee (DND-Proper BAC).

VIII. The invitation is also posted in the DBM Procurement Service website at www.procurementservice.org, and the DND website at www.dnd.gov.ph, in accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184. Further, it shall also be posted at conspicuous places in the premises of the Department of National Defense (DND).

(Sgd.) ASSISTANT SECRETARY RUBEN F. CIRON
Chairman, DND-Proper BAC

(PDI – October 4 & 11, 2006)

ANNOUNCEMENT

To All Qualified Overseas Absentee Voters

EXTENDED! October 31, 2006

Last day to file application for Registration/Certification as Overseas Absentee Voters and filing of Application for Transfer of Overseas Registration Record from one Post to another or from one country to another under the same consular jurisdiction of the Post or from Post to a Philippine city/municipality other than the original residence of applicant.

Filing of application for Transfer of Overseas Registration Record from Post to the same Philippine city/municipality comprising original residence of applicant until **November 30, 2006.**

avoid the rush, REGISTER early!

IMPORTANT: Dual citizens who will register as overseas absentee voters shall no longer be required to execute the Affidavit of Intent.

A reminder from the **COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS**

Education and Information Department (Hotline Numbers	Committee on Overseas Absentee Voting (Hotline Numbers
525-9302 • 525-9334 • 525-9335	522-2251 • 521-2952
525-9345 • 525-9295 • 525-9296	(TeleFax)523-9924

website: www.comelec.gov.ph • www.dfa.gov.ph • e-mail: coav@comelec.gov.ph

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ONLINE AUCTION www.henrybutcher.com

Optical Disc Drive Manufacturing Equipment

Sale Closes: Thursday, 12th October 2006 at 6pm
On View: Strictly by Appointment
Assets Located: Henry Butcher Auction Center
Hilon Compound, Bo. Mayapa, Canlubang, Laguna

(12) KIKUSUI COR5500; (6) COR 5500U; COR 5501; COR 5501U Digital Oscilloscopes; (2) IWATSU SS7810 Oscilloscopes; HEWLETT PACKARD 54600B Oscilloscope; YOKOGAWA 701510 Oscilloscope; (5) KIKUSUI KJMG6765S Jitter Meters; (3) YOKOGAWA Reflow Oven Profilers; AGILENT 4263B LCR Meter; (8) LEADER 856G; Multimeters; Asstd. Telecom/LAN Equipment; HIOS Power Supplies; IMADA Push/Pull Scales; HIOS Digital Torque Meters; COROM Noise Measurement Chambers; NIPPON Pulse Heat Power Supplies; NUTEK Linking Conveyors, etc.

For further information please contact Chris Major at
Tel: 852 2910/11 Email: chris.major@henrybutcher.com

Register at www.henrybutcher.com to view and bid on the lots

Goindustry Henry Butcher | HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILS. INC. Rm. 102 Jollland Bldg., 670 Edsa, Pasay City Tel No.: 852 2910/11 or 854 4017-19 Fax No.: 831 9507 E-mail: marlon@henrybutcher.com

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WELCOME REALTY: 413-3313 * FORTE REALTY: 830-0372

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TOWNHOUSE FOR SALE
1.2M – Taytay Twnhse

Newly renovated twnhse, 2 storey concrete floorings, 2 brns upstairs with covered terrace, spacious sala, kitchen and laundry areas plus maid's quarter and carport on a 75sqms. Lot. Located at 18 Everlasting St., Cherryville Subd., San Juan Taytay, beside Golden City Homes and SM Taytay (underconstruction) Contact Manny 09178969535, Nancy 0915-6812551.

POEA HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

Major confab on heart care to draw world's top experts

HEART DISEASE IS AVOIDABLE. FOLLOW A heart healthy lifestyle and you may well enjoy a healthier life for years to come. This simple message will be at the heart of discussions when experts gather to talk about the latest in heart care in a medical forum shaping up as one of the biggest events in cardiology in Asia and the Philippines – the International Symposium on Cardiology on October 5-6 at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila in Quezon City.

Organized by St. Luke's Medical Center-Heart Institute, a center of excellence in Asia for the management of cardiovascular disease, the symposium will touch all aspects of cardiology – clinical, diagnostic, interventional and preventive – and delve on the all-important role of lifestyle in cardiovascular health with such topics as the truth of fad diets, smoking cessation and exercise training.

Renowned specialists from the world's leading medical centers are scheduled to speak and top cardiologists and surgeons from St. Luke's heart Institute will join them in the faculty. Featured speakers and their topics include: Dr. Byron Hoogwerf of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, America's No. 1 center for heart care – "Strategies for the metabolic Syndrome and Type 2 Diabetes" and "Treatment Strategies for halting the Progression of CVD in High Risk Patients"; Dr. Jay Edelberg, Associate professor of medicine at Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University – "Targetting Filbrin for Neovascularization" and "Advances in Cardiac Regeneration"; Dr. Anthon R. Fuisz of the Washington Hospital Center – "Cardiac MR Perfusion Imaging" and "Clinical Applications of Cardiac MRI: Diagnosis and Therapeutic Implications,"; Dr. Ray Squires, director of the Cardiovascular Rehabilitation Program at Mayo Clinic, will delve on the state of the science in cardiac rehabilitation and "Exercise Training in Chronic Heart Failure" and how the medical community has completely turned around on the issue in only 15 years; Dr. Chandana Samaranayake, Manager for Clinical Applications of Philips Medical Systems – "Clinical Applications of 3-D Echo: Diagnostic and Therapeutic Implications,"; and Kathleen Zarling, a Cardiovascular Clinical Nurse Specialist for High Risk CAD Patients of Mayo Medical Center – "The Truth About Fad Diets" and "Early Intervention for Tobacco Cessation in a Smoke-Free Acute Care Medical Center.

Prospective participants may contact the symposium secretariat at 723-0101 ext. 5532/5529. Online registration is also available through the St. Luke's website www.stluke.com.ph.

Erratum

Please be advised that the HP print ad that was published in the October 3, 2006 issue of Philippine Daily Inquirer had an erroneous inclusion of a free HP OfficeJet 4355 Printer.

Please be guided accordingly.

Thank you.

"I HAVE FOUGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, I HAVE FINISHED THE RACE, I HAVE KEPT THE FAITH."
2 TIM 4:7

PERFECTO "Pete/Pitong" CLUTARIO BORJA

Sorsogon City and Quezon City

*Peacefully joined our Lord and his parents **Macario** and **Cecilia** on October 2, 2006 at the age of 74.*

Papa once told us, "The only permanent thing in life is change." A change has happened in our lives with the loss of a great man, the anchor of our family, the strongman, our superman. The time we have spent together as a family will never be replaced and will be etched in our hearts and minds forever. Thank you for all the love, guidance, strength, wisdom, understanding and zest for life. We will surely miss you Papa.

His bereaved wife, **Imelda Lavarez**; children **Maria Cecilia & Jeffry Teleha** and **Maria Rosario & Napoleon Tarayao**; brothers & sisters, **Niña (†) & Fred Ferrer, Dodie, Babie & Danny Sulit (†), Mamo & Onie Talatala, Ching-Ching (†), Nonong (†) & Susan Cochico**; brothers and sisters-in-law, cousins, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels on Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Mass of the Resurrection will be on Sunday, 8th of October 2006 at 9:00 a.m., Arlington Memorial Chapels.

Cremains will be interred at the Santuario de San Vicente De Paul.

I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith." **2 Timothy 4:7**

Diocese of Malolos

The Most Reverend Jose F. Oliveros, D.D.
President, Immaculate Conception School for Boys (ICSB),
Immaculate Conception School of Malolos (ICSM),
The ICSB-ICSM Fathers, Faculty, Staff, Students
The ICONS Alumni Association and the Parents'-Teachers' Council

extend our sincerest condolences to the family of our principal,

MR. RODOLFO C. BAGAY

January 31, 1935 - October 2, 2006
a mentor, a beloved friend and a faithful companion in this journey of life.

Interment will be on October 7, 2006, Saturday after the 1:00 p.m. Requiem Mass at the Cathedral-Basilica Minore of the Immaculate Conception, Malolos City.

Vigil Schedule	:	October 2 – 3: Family Residence – Canalate, Malolos City
October 4 – 5	:	Pieta Chapel, Basilica Minore of the Immaculate Conception
October 5 – 7	:	ICSB Chapel, Malolos City

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Message of Thanks

FELICITAS VILLARAMA-CUNANAN

October 17, 1918 – September 21, 2006

We, the bereaved family: children **Eddie, Rony, Cherry, Cynch, Aris, Abet**, in-laws, grandchildren and great-grandchildren

wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all of you who spent precious time with us, offered Masses and Prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and expressed in many ways your love, concern and support in our moments of grief and sorrow.

May we request you to continue to include her in your prayers and Masses.

CRISANTO S. ARBAN, SR.

of Nagcarlan, Laguna

peacefully joined our Creator last October 3, 2006 at the age of 83.

His wife, **Virginia** (†); children **Veyo, Ronnie & Baby, Dodie & Banny, Johssel & Tess, Marisu** (†), **Cris & Lita** and **Nanette & Ed** (†); grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque.

Interment will be on October 6, 2006 at Manila Memorial Park after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

We design **OBITUARIES** for free.

DOROTEA TORRES-CABRERA

of Quezon, Nueva Ecija

Peacefully joined her Creator and her loving husband Mario Cabrera at 4:30 am on the 29th of September, 2006 at the age of 72.

Her loving children **Ric & Chona Cabrera, Maya & Raymond Ciriaco** and grandchildren **Gianina, Georgina, Rica, Gilbertina, Gianfranco** and relatives request your prayers for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at their residence in Quezon, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on Thursday, October 5, 2006 at the town cemetery of Quezon.

ATTY. ALEJANDRO P. RUIZ, JR.

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord on October 1, 2006 at the age of 71.

His bereaved wife **Jovencia**; children **Jocelyn & Rudy, Caroline, Alex & Tina, Florence**; & grandchildren **JR, Jeffrey, Jerome, Ali & Keana**, relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Inc. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

ANTONIO "Tony" C. BLANCO

of Alabama Street, New Manila, Quezon City

Joined his Creator last October 1, 2006 at the age of 73.

*His bereaved wife **CARMEN**; children **FRANCIS, JOSEPH** and **RIA, MA. ISABEL** and **MARLON, STEPHEN JAMES** and **EDEL, MA. CARMENCITA** and **JULIAN, MA. CARINA** and **FREDERICK, MA CRISTINA** and **MICHAEL JAMES**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.*

His remains lie in state for viewing until October 5, 2006 at Tuklong San Jose Chapel, Christ the King Seminary Compound, E. Rodriguez, New Manila, Quezon City.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**
WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and bank-to-bank payments
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

People, Events & Products

Protect employee health with LifeMed Corporate Health Program

ASIDE FROM UNCHECKED ABSENTEEISM, one of the most common problems faced by top and middle-management is the fast turnover rates of employees - especially rank-and-filers who display great potentials at the workplace - brought about by lack of suitable health plans.

It seems true that only the hardiest of them would risk life and limb for a company that could not care less with their health-related problems and needs.

But since everybody is prone to unforeseen ailments and other health-related problems, corporate heads are well advised to be always on the guard when it comes to the health and well-being of their people since absenteeism could greatly affect overall performance in the workforce.

So, if you find yourself facing the same problem with the people working for you, make way for a health program that aims to cater exactly these concerns.

LifeMed Corporate Health Program provides small and medium-sized businesses with health coverage for their employees at an affordable premium.

Let your people know you care for their health and well-being and gain their confidence. Invest in their health for only P1,800 per individual a year and enjoy these health-sustaining benefits designed for your valuable employees the whole year:

- Basic 5 Medical Checkup (Includes physical examination, complete blood count), routine urinalysis, routine fecalysis, chest X-ray)
- Hepa B-screening; blood typing
- Drug testing (shabu and marijuana)
- Unlimited doctor's consultation; Hospital income benefit of P400 per day; Life insurance benefit of P100,000; and accidental insurance benefit of P100,000

For complete convenience and confidentiality, LifeMed will conduct screening specifically for Basic 5, Hepa B, Blood Typing and lastly drug testing, which is recognized by the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and other government agencies.

More, during the first 180 days, the LifeMed Corporate Health Program is transferable to another employee in case the enrollee leaves the company.

As an add-on health-care benefit on top of any other existing healthcare plans like PhilHealth or, Medicare, LifeMed also has other customized health plans designed not only for corporations but also for household helpers and young professionals.

These are the LifeMed Household Health Program designed for household helpers. For only P1,400 per person per year, busy and highly mobile homeowners can now protect the health of their children who spend more time with the household helpers everyday of the week.

The LifeMed Business Professionals Health Plan is designed to keep young professionals in good health as they concentrate on the development of their jobs and careers for only P1,600 per individual per year.

Since May 2000, LifeMed Clinics and Laboratories (LCML) has been recognized by the Department of Health as a medical facility and healthcare provider that offers a wide range of services including but not limited to pre-employment physical examinations, annual physical examinations, drug testing, specialty clinics, and a variety of other out-patient health care services. For inquiries call or visit at BPI Bank Building, 92 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City (887-6384; 843-2193). You can also log on to http://www.lifemedclinics.com.

28th Family Rosary Crusade at Sta. Catalina College

THE STA. CATALINA COLLEGE in Legarda, Manila is holding its Family Rosary Crusade 9-day novena from until Oct. 7 at the SCC Chapel. The schedule of this year's celebration, theme and Mass celebrants for each day are:—"The Rosary and Family life" - Rev. Fr. Roy Alipio; Sept. 30—"The Rosary and the Gift of Love and Faith" - Rev. Fr. Winston Cabading, OP; Oct. 1—"The Rosary and the Dignity of All Human Life"- Msgr. Sabino Vengco; Oct. 2—"The Rosary and Responsible Parenthood" - Rev. Fr. Gerard Timoner, OP; Oct. 3—"The Rosary and the Dignity and Rights of Women" - Rev. Fr. Roland Castro, OP; Oct. 4, 3 p.m.—"The Rosary and the Community of Disciples" - Rev. Fr. Francis Lucas; Oct. 5, 3 p.m.—"The Rosary and the Youth Today" - Rev. Fr. Honorato Castigador, OP; Oct. 6, 3 p.m.—"The Rosary and Vocation and Mission of Women" - Rev. Fr. Alfredo Sabado, SVD; Oct. 7, 2:30 p.m.—"SCC Family: Pilgrims of Faith and Love to Jesus Through Mary and Her Rosary" - Most Rev. Bishop Bernardino Cortez, D.D. (Auxiliary Bishop of Manila) and the Salve Regina, Blessing Despedida Ala Virgen with Rev. Fr. Christian Buenafe, OCARM.

The procession will start from SCC Campus, right to Legarda Street, U-turn to flyover, right to Sta. Teresita Street, left to G. Tuazon, right to F. Cayco, left to J. Fajardo, left to Earnshaw, left to Manrique, left to Lardizabal, right to Jhocson, left to Legarda, then back to SCC Campus.

Everybody is invited to join this year's FRC novena and procession.

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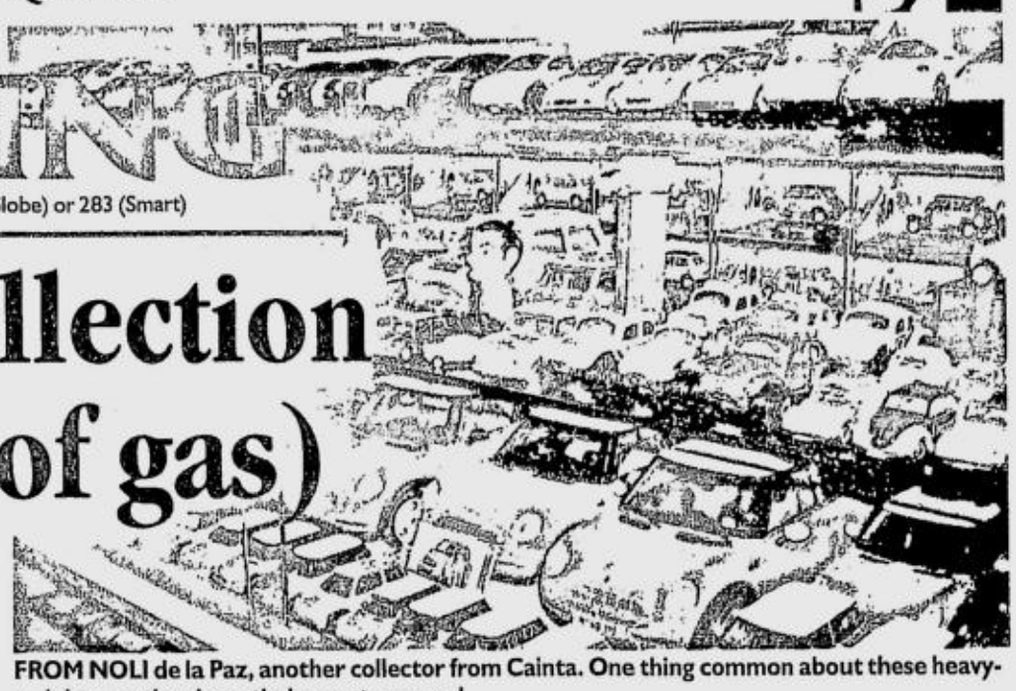
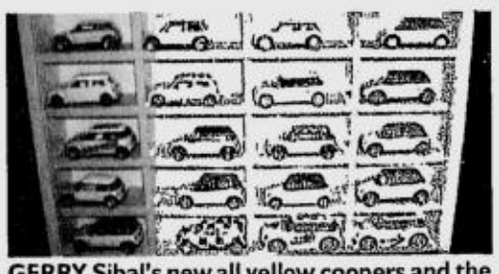
Satisfy your fantasy car collection (without sweating a drop of gas)



FROM NOLI de la Paz, another collector from Cainta. One thing common about these heavyweights are they have their own toy room!



GERRY Sibal's new all yellow coopers and the complete Johnny Lightning New Beetle releases.

By Tessa R. Salazar

JUST BECAUSE YOU can't have one in the garage doesn't mean you can't have one in your display shelf!" That seems to be the maxim of the Diecast Car Collectors of the Philippines also known as Diecast Car Philippines.

One of the hottest crazes among car enthusiasts (or shall we say hobbyists) today is diecast collecting. Through collecting diecast models, those million-dollar cars you fantasized about since those "deprived" childhood days are now (literally) on the palm of your hands.

And if you look for them hard enough, you can find every kind of brand model in different production years for as low as P80 to as extravagant as P3,000. The normal store price for a 1:64 scale model is from P80 to P250. Larger scale models would fetch from P300 to P3,000 apiece. One could even go further depending on one's budget.

Varied models

These diecast models are as varied as the real ones they replicate. There are vintage automobiles of the 50s, muscle machines, "Hot Wheels," aspirational cars such as the Ferrari, Porsche, Lamborghini, the Evolution series, and Hummers. But unlike the real cars that come with price tags that would make you sell your soul to the speed devils or cause you to sacrifice your kid's college tuition, these diecast models will just make you skip a night out or two.

Obviously, diecast collecting also saves you that expensive piece of real estate. Imagine if you had a thousand of the real things. But with the same number of cars in diecast scale, a thousand items can fit in a manageable shelf. And no one will barge in every now and then asking for your car keys demanding a spin around the neighborhood. The worst "wear and tear" your models will ever be subjected to is when your dedicated group of fellow diecast collectors put up an expo or "mini showcase" of sorts, and so you have to figure out how to fit a thousand cars inside your real SUV or subcompact sedan.

Mjolnir Xoce V. Ong, known to DCPH forum as Mechajol has 500 diecast car collection, 90 percent of which are Beetle collector's items. On the centerpiece of his assortment is his new classic drag bus worth P2,000.

Willie Malay has an impressive lineup of rare and old matchboxes made during the '50s and the '60s. His dad started buying for him in 1961. He recounted how these toys were bought in Mercury drug outlets, Goodwill Bookstores, Greg Shoes and even in the defunct Commander Drugstore.

SATISFY/ B2-2

Collecting starts with the first item

By Tessa R. Salazar

THE LONG, ARDUOUS JOURNEY OF a diecast collector always starts with the first item. Once you have that which is most precious in your hands, the next step is to find others like it.

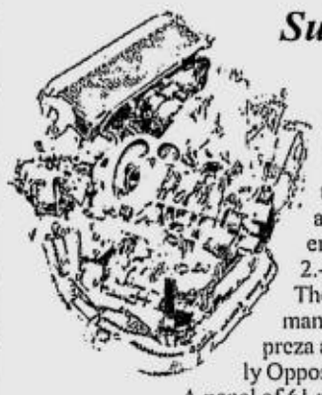
From DCPH members themselves, here are helpful tips to push you forward in completing your dream collection.

1 It's better to focus on a certain type of collection first, rather than collecting based on a general criteria. For example, you can focus more on collecting yellow VW Beetles, or pink cars.

2 How about starting a collection of rare cars? It's more challenging,

COLLECTING/ B2-2

Subaru 2.5 Liter Turbo Boxer Engine Wins 2006 International Engine of the Year Award

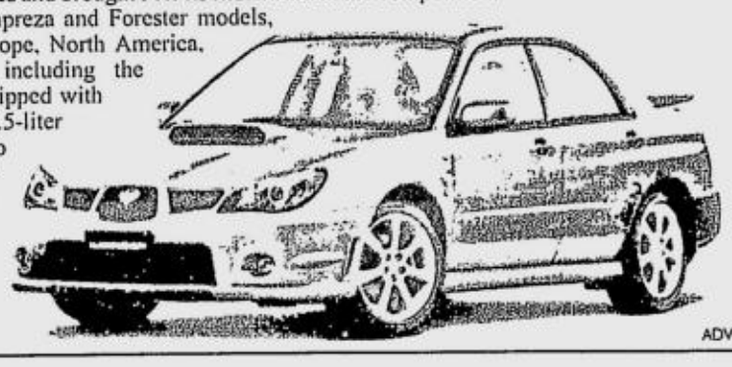


Fuji Heavy Industries LTD. (FHI), the global manufacturer of transportation and aerospace-related products and maker of Subaru automobile announced that its 2.5-liter Horizontally Opposed boxer engine with a turbo charger was voted this year's winner in the 2- to 2.-liter engine class of the International Engine of the Year Awards. The award ceremony took place at the Engine Expo in Stuttgart, Germany. The award granted to the Subaru engine, with which Subaru Impreza and Forester models are equipped, marks the first time a Horizontally Opposed engine has been chosen in the prestigious annual awards.

A panel of 61 renowned journalists from 29 countries served as judges in the competition organized by UKIP Media & Events - Automotive Magazines' Division, Britain's largest group of auto technology magazines, which includes Engine Technology International and Automotive Testing Technology International. The judges applied their technical knowledge and impressions, scoring for the vehicle's performance, drivability, ease of handling, fuel economy and refinement. Based on the points given by the judges, the grand prize, prizes for best engines in eight capacity classes and three other categories were awarded.

The now internationally acclaimed Subaru 2.5-liter turbo engine features powerful torque as well as environmental considerations. By employing a secondary air injection system, improving on the engine control system and modifying combustion chamber designs, FHI has made significant improvements in lowering vehicle emission level. The engine achieves optimal balance between nimble responses in low-speed driving ranges and enhanced power output, thanks to design changes of the water jacket in the cylinder head and layout modifications in the exhaust manifolds to minimize pump loss while ensuring smooth gas flow. These engine refinements and improvements have been recognized by the judges and brought FHI its first award in the competition.

Subaru's current Impreza and Forester models, which are sold in Europe, North America, Australia and Asia including the Philippines, come equipped with the award-winning 2.5-liter turbo engines. Also available is the 2.0-liter engine Horizontally Opposed boxer engine available in the Legacy sedan and Forester X variant.



ADVT.

The new Subaru Forester 2.5XT. Carries a horizontally-opposed, turbo-charged, free-revving DOHC Boxer engine with an excellent pick-up response yet lower center of gravity. With full-time All-Wheel-Drive that ensures traction. And heavy-duty independent suspension for precise handling and a smooth drive. Engineered with Subaru's All Wheel Driving System and everything about active safety, the equally loaded Forester 2.0X also boasts of a smooth, light drive that perfectly complements its aggressive character. Making sure that every Forester is enough for you to reach the top, alive

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In our nature

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

IT'S SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND THE sun is making its presence felt, the weather rather pleasant actually. The telltale signs of the typhoon's wrath are still very much evident though. All around our fair city, work crews struggle to repair the damage wrought by the 200-kph plus winds of last Thursday. Felled trees, snapped posts and bowed billboards are starting to become a common sight, no longer eliciting any sort of surprise. One can really does get used to all the destruction at some point.

Seated on a curb side as I write this, I'm waiting my turn at the car wash and it is jampacked. Wanting to clean my car of all the grime and foliage of the last few days of wind, debris and rain is on the top of my "to do list" today, my No. 1 priority.

Along with about a dozen other people queuing for the high-pressure wash, this is the way we are coping with the disaster, I guess. We are the lucky ones, with only cleaning and primping to worry about. There seem to be quite a few who share this same dilemma, as talking shop with the owner, he tells me business has seen a frenetic pace since Friday.

Some suffered more

Some like minded people who care for their cars as much as I do suffered more. A few friends had their cars struck and damaged—by most mundane of objects propelled ballistic, like trash cans and the odd MMDA plastic barrier; some though were flattened by whole trees and crushed by snapped electric posts. Body shops are doing brisk business too, I figure out. Life is just like that I guess, the luck of being at the wrong place at the most unfortunate of times.

The gravity of the situation lies beyond dented cars and scratched paint. The shop owner says he still has no electricity at home, with his block the only one still off the grid in his area. He works as early as he can, closing as late as his strength holds out, so he can go home and fall asleep tired, ambivalent to the lack of power and light. I wonder how much more of Metro Manila has to cope with this problem—or worse. Another case of a random series of events conspiring to drive us mad while searching for reasons.

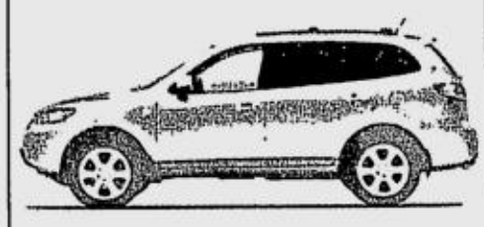
Guilt enters my mind as I think of those who have much more to deal with because of the intensity of the wind and rain. People are homeless. They have no means of getting their lives back on track without help or aid. I remember my No. 1 concern about the onslaught of Thursday. People died. I'm disgusted when I realize all I've had to worry about was my car. It's not as if I was oblivious to the poststorm damage from very early on.

Survey the damage

Curious about what lay out in the dark of Thursday night, I took a drive through the streets of Manila to survey the damage. Though surprised by the level of debris on the roads, it never dawned upon me just how lasting the effects of the winds would be. There was very much doubt in my mind that any part of the city was able to escape unscathed from the damage. I drove back home past midnight thinking that Friday would be another regular workday. It never crossed my mind that the world outside our metropolis was in a much more dire condition.

Thinking of what I'm doing here and how trivial my worries are, I guess I'm just trying to cope with last Thursday and the ensuing chaos. Lives were interrupted, likely in a more serious manner than mine, but I just have this need to pick myself up too and get on with whatever was put on hold by the typhoon. It'll take sometime for things to settle again, but I guess I have it rather easy. Fortunate as most of us are, we must not forget those who have borne the brunt of the typhoon.

While I worry and fret about watermarks and the possibility of grunge building up in the creases and folds of my car's coachwork, I've come to realize just how miniscule my problems are in comparison to the rest of the metropolis, the nation for that matter. Forgive the myopic, selfish view of what was really just an inconvenience to me at most. Those of us who can should help those who cannot help themselves. If we find the capacity to help in our nature, then maybe all of us can get on with our lives—every single Filipino.



Hyundai Sante Fe demand outstrips supply

Motorists have been told that US demand for the 2007 Sante Fe is currently outstripping supply, which analysts have attributed to the qualities of the new vehicle.

In Montgomery, US, for example, Hyundai's car plant has managed to manufacture 10,382 Santa Fes in August, out of a total of 22,257 vehicles, reports the Montgomery Advertiser.

Consequently, production of the new sports utility vehicle (SUV) now contributes almost half of total output at the plant, despite the fact that it only began constructing the vehicle five months ago.

"Everything that I've seen says that the 2007 Sante Fe is a marked improvement over the older versions," said Erich Merkle, automotive analyst at consultancy firm IRN.

"It's not a question of how many they can sell, it's really a question in terms of how many they can make."

Hyundai claims that the new Sante Fe combines the off-roading ability of an SUV with the practicality of a multi-purpose vehicle.

Hyundai Matrix score highly in What Car? survey

Hyundai enjoyed considerable success in the 2006 What Car? J.D. Power Survey of Customer Satisfaction, with its Matrix model scoring particularly highly.

The Korean car manufacturer now boasts six cars among the top five in their respective categories, with its Matrix model fighting off all competitors to claim top place in the Compact MPV category.

Overall, the Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) gave Hyundai a score of 813 points, taking the firm from 15th to tenth in the best brand stakes, ahead of Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz and Saab.

Furthermore, Hyundai improved its customer satisfaction reputation by a staggering 18 points, ahead of the industry average of five points.

Hyundai also increased its score for vehicle quality by 17 points, despite an industry-wide decline during the year. It was also the sixth most reliable of all 36 make of cars surveyed, and was found to be the seventh least likely make of car to breakdown.

Satisfy your fantasy car collection . . .

From page B2-1

Couple's choice

Businessman Ermine Potenciano collects Hummer and over 200 Muscle Cars while his wife Lilet, an executive of a drug company, has a 32-piece Ford Hot Rod collection and over 50 pieces of different pickups.

Third Gonzales, another DCPH heavyweight, owns around 500 to 550 Ferraris. His models are from 1/64 156F1 Sharknose, which he said was the inspiration for the recent F430, to the 1/18 Elite FXX. Gonzales estimated that most of his collection, which measures 1/64, would fetch $5 to $10 and $40 to $60 for the bigger scales. Gonzales has 11 Enzo Ferraris in 1/64, 1 in 1/43, 5 in 1/18.

Gerry Sibal, a senior information management analyst of San Miguel Corp. and the DCPH. Info's moderator, said his group has focused collectors in the club. His focus, for instance, is on yellow cars—1:87 to 1:55 in scale—and he believes he has the most in the following categories: New Cooper, New Beetle and Classic Beetle. He also has the Superman-themed diecasts, which he said are "not really all yellow." Gerry was a Superman collector before a diecast collector. He also has Johnny Lightning New Beetles with all colors and designs.

"My other collection, although focused also in concept, can be overmatched by other collectors who collect in a broader scope. This includes (same scale range as the above): All yellow Ferraris, McDonalds' Nascar cars, Coca-Cola Trucks, all yellow Hummer H2/H3, and all yellow Volkswagen (various models)," he says.

Other members

There are other members who are lawyers, doctors and architects, banker, copywriter, advertiser, recruitment officer, web designer, nurse, computer programmer, information analyst, dentist, salesman, teacher, mechanical, civil, electronics and communications engineer, stock market trader, freelance DJ, bar owner, businessman, entrepreneur, event organizer, interior designer, part-time fire volunteer, student and even professional bum (as written by one member).

Members observed that those who suppressed their childhood fantasies of dream cars are now fulfilling their dreams through diecast car collecting. This is not to mention the certain "high" you feel when you finally find what you're looking for or when you have completed your collection.

Thousands of diecast collectors are now scattered across the globe, on the lookout for the next "needle in the haystack," so to speak. For some "outsiders" to the cult, this may all be an effort in lunacy. But then, aren't we all passionate (and looney) about something or another?

Male to female ratio

The males, however, seem to be more attracted to such small things than females. Sibal, who is also one of the DCPH founding members, said the ratio of male to female registered members in the dcph.org forum is 13 to 1. Of the current 1,147 registered forum members in dcph.org, about 55 percent have at least posted once. Currently, 600 members are actively posting in the forum.

At "swapmeets," DCPH can count on 250 to 300 members showing up, while it counts over 1,000 more members outside the country. It is also during these meets that members from the provinces (Bacolod, Baguio, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Laguna) and even from as far as the United States attend (and not on a diecast plane, a member reminds us).

The current attendance roster is a long way from that initial official DCPH meeting two years ago, when only about 70 members gathered. Today, DCPH has members, Filipinos or otherwise, from Canada, Australia, Ireland, England, Hong Kong, China, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, The Netherlands, Belgium, Singapore, Indonesia, and Japan.

Indeed, for members of DCPH (www.dcph.info), it has become a scale-model world, after all.

Collecting . . .

From page B2-1

but the results can fuel a long night of exciting conversations (log on to dcph.info to help guide you).

3 A "themed" collection can also sustain your interest (e.g. Hot Wheels, Nascar, F1, car brands, "movie" cars, etc);

4 Your collection should also have a story behind it, the way that every item in your collection fits a certain part of the storytelling (This works well for a historical collection of, let's say, World War 2 cars or the evolving Mitsubishi Evolution series). Perhaps, even the experience of collecting the items can be a story in itself.

5 Networking with other collectors is one of the fastest ways to add numbers and depth to your collection. Aside from DCPH, diecast collectors can also compare notes with MCCH (MatchBox Collectors Community Hall-international) and HotWheelsCollectors.com. Attending swapmeets or toy conventions can also be a big boost to your collection and motivation.

6 Need a guide to buying a model at the right place at the right time? Sibal's foremost tip would be to practice patience. Avoid buying items above their standard retail prices (SRPs), especially if such items have just recently been released. Even in the diecast industry, hoarding and selling in the black market does happen. Your network, as defined in No. 5, will help you avoid this costly pitfall. Sibal says DCPH has helped minimize hoarding in the industry. "Collectors have sought refuge in DCPH and happily found out they could buy models at normal and even lower prices."

7 Be aware of quality finds. Some items are noticeably highly detailed, which automatically convert to higher prices. Be well-informed of these various brands by surfing the Net and checking on eBay, for example.

8 Diecast models vary in size. Your collection doesn't have to be limited by the 1:18 standard. There's the 1:12 scale, and even a 1:6. Sibal estimates, however, that the smallest acceptable scale for a collector is 1:72. But then again, there are still smaller scales, such as 1:87 and Sibal's microscopic 1:100 diecast model and an even smaller plastic 1:144 model.

9 Not everything is for sale. But then, not everything given expects something in return. In the precise world of collecting, there is such a thing called "RAOKing" (random act of kindness, that practice of some collectors giving others something of their own without expecting anything in return). Again, this can only happen if you cultivate your No. 5.

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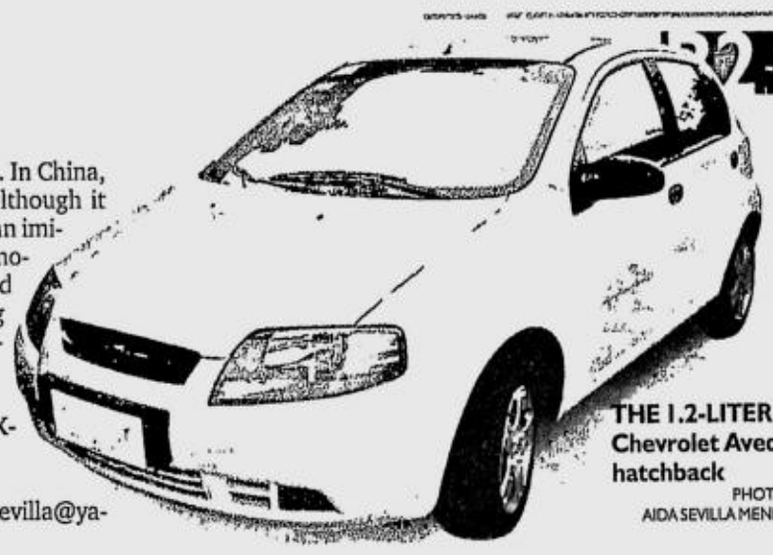

THE 1.2-LITER Chevrolet Aveo hatchback

PHOTOS BY AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA

IN THE PHILIPPINES, GENERAL MOTORS' Chevrolet division appears to be headed where other carmakers dare not go. GM is fielding a variety of budget-priced small cars in a land where car buyers, aping the Americans, go gaga over big SUVs and pickup trucks.

Sure, GM also sells pricey gas-guzzling giants like the Suburban and the Tahoe, but lately GM has been on a minicar-launching spree. Last June 30, GM unveiled not one, but two low-cost small cars, the 2006 1.2-liter manual transmission (MT) Aveo hatchback (P550,000) and the tiny 1.0-liter Spark MT (P490,000) imported CBU from China. Yesterday, GM completed the Aveo line-up by launching the 2007 Aveo 1.4-liter sedan, selling for P640,000 with MT, P680,000 with automatic transmission.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Econocar

GM first entered the econocar market three years ago with the 1.5-liter Aveo hatchback. Now, GM has got all bases covered with the Spark and the Aveo 1.2 seeking to grab market share from the 1.1-liter Kia Picanto and 1.1-liter Hyundai Getz, while the 2007 Aveo 1.4-liter sedan competes with the 1.4-liter Getz, the 1.5-liter Toyota Vios and the 1.5-liter Honda City.

The Aveo, based on South Korea's Daewoo Kalo, is a product of GM Daewoo Automotive & Technology Co. with body designed by Giorgetto Guigiaro's studio in Turin. The 1.5-liter Aveo MT, when I test-drove it in September 2003, proved to be a spunky subcompact capable of hitting 140 km per hour on the Skyway. The same cannot be said of the Aveo 1.2 MT as its 72 ps/5,400 rpm engine does not pack enough power for highway overtaking although it can reach 120 kph.

Element

In city traffic, for which it was obviously created, the Aveo 1.2 is in its element: brisk and nimble, thanks to responsive steering. Fuel economy, maneuverability and easy-to-park mobility are givens.

The 2006 Aveo hatchback's shape has not changed much from the 2003 model, what's new are the head lamps, front grille and bumper. The side view mirrors and door handles are black, no longer color-keyed as in three years ago. The tires are still 185/60R14 on steel rims with full wheel covers.

For 4

Inside, there is ample room for four adults. Easy-to-read gauges including a LED type odometer and logically located controls make for simple ergonomics. The budget-grade plastics and manual windows remind you that this is an econocar. The seats are wide and comfortable enough, with the back seat a bit elevated. When the back seat is in place, the hatchback has space for just a row of grocery bags. But the rear seatbacks can be folded forward without removing the headrests to expand fairly flat cargo room to 42 cubic feet.

The audio system consists of an AM/FM radio with in-dash CD player, four speakers and MP3 playback—the latter an important component for the younger generation which is the Aveo's target market. On the other hand, I found the manual transmission a bit notchy and the brakes (discs in front, drums at the rear) still not confidence-inspiring.

Minimal safety

As can be expected of a low-priced small car, the Aveo has minimal safety features limited to 3-pt ELR seatbelts and a third brake lamp. Summing up, the Aveo 1.2 hatchback is a stylish subcompact ideal for pleasant everyday transportation within city limits. It just needs a bit more horsepower for zippy performance. Perhaps this is where the 2007 Aveo 1.4 sedan fills the bill?

The Spark, based on the Daewoo Matiz, is another Guigiaro-designed minicar meant for city driving. GM claims that its 1.0-liter SOHC engine capable of 66 ps/5,400 rpm averages 18-20 km per liter and that it can rev up to 140 kph. However, I failed to verify these claims as the Spark's tiny size (1.5 meters tall, 3.5 meters long and 1.5 meters wide) made me nervous about trying it out on the Skyway.

Suspension

Surprisingly enough, however, the Spark has an excellent suspension (McPherson struts fore, multilink aft) system. This was proven when it was whipped around corners at adequately high speed inside a traffic-free subdivision in Alabang. Unlike the 1.2 Aveo, the Spark has front power windows, side protector molding and color-keyed side mirrors and door handles. A tuner/cassette player with only one hollow-sounding speaker is located at the center of the dash.

But don't look down on the Spark. In China, it is one of GM's best-selling cars although it costs two-thirds more than the QQ, an imitation produced by Chery Automobile Co. GM Daewoo has sued Chery for illegally copying the Spark—but that's another story.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Is there life before coffee?

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@yahoo.com.

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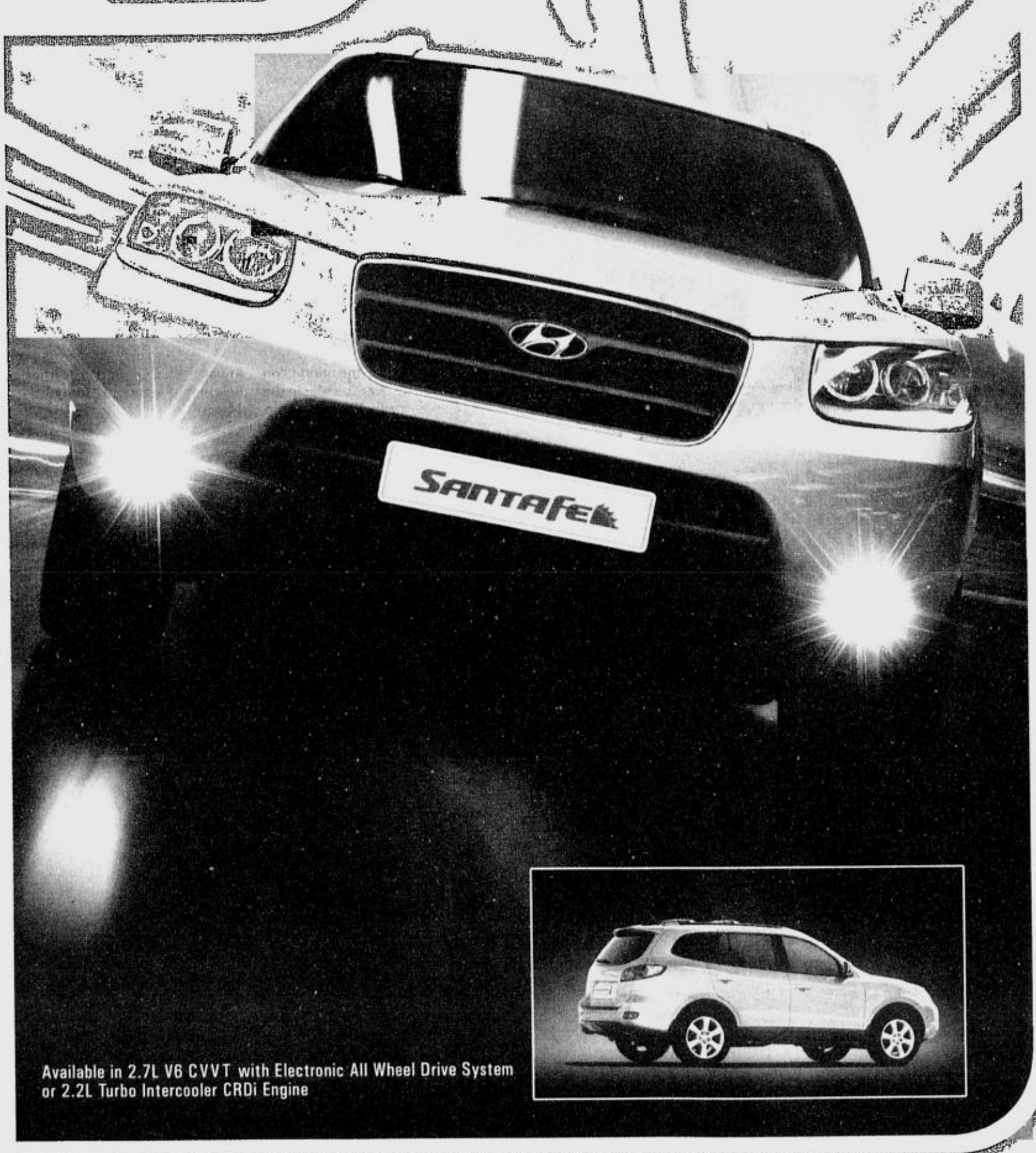

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Promo period is from August 15 to October 15, 2006.

FUTURISTIC RIDE
Toyota's Personal Mobility Car, one of the highlights of the 2nd World of Toyota Motorshow, was experienced by President Arroyo as she was taken for a ride at the space age concept car. Guiding her to the futuristic ride is Toyota chair Dr. George S.K. Ty and vice chair Alfred V. Ty.

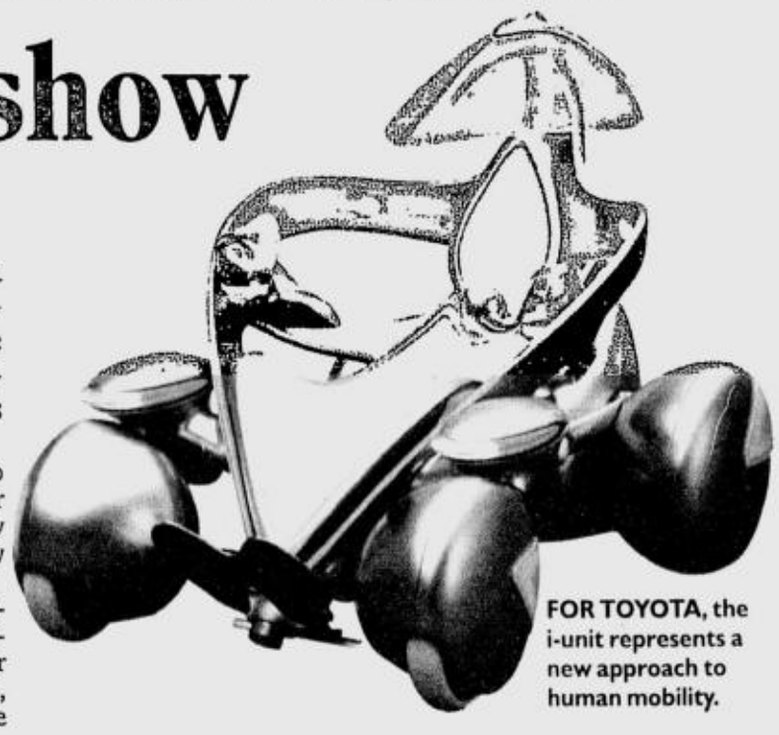
Toyota flexes muscle at motorshow

By Charles E. Buban

TOYOTA IS UNDOUBTEDLY A successful car company—profits and share are climbing and in almost every country where it is present, Toyota enjoys a dominant market share position.

One reason is that the company appears to be geared to producing the right products for regional markets as proven in the recently concluded 2nd World of Toyota Motorshow held at the Le Pavillon in Pasay City.

The motorshow showcased the Toyota Motor Philippines Corp.'s complete lineup including the all-new Camry, Hiace Super Grandia, and the Innova High-end V grade, that were publicly displayed for the first time during the six-day event.



FOR TOYOTA, the i-unit represents a new approach to human mobility.

The public also got its first glimpse of the seven-seater Avanza, Toyota's upcoming small multipurpose vehicle, which is an entirely new model line developed specifically for this region.

New products

"Toyota has a lot of new products in the pipeline and the ones presented during the motorshow hold the top spot of their respective lineup in terms of performance and amenities," announced TMPC first VP for marketing division Daniel Isla.

Leading this newest batch of vehicle models is the 2006 all-new Camry that has been elevated from a sophisticated mid-size passenger car to a premium luxury sedan.

The new Camry now comes with a class-leading 3.5-liter V6 Dual VVT-i engine, 6-speed sequential automatic transmission, cruise control, smart entry and start system, vehicle stability control, adaptive front lighting system with HID, and dual SRS side airbags.

Together with the 2006 Camry, TMPC also unveiled the Super Grandia, the company's best bet in the luxury people-mover category as highlighted by its 10-seater layout with two captain seats, automatic transmission diesel engine, leather seats, audio and DVD video system with six speakers, front fog lamps, as well as added safety features such as ABS, security system and clearance and back sonar.

3 new variants

TMPC also showcased a beefed-up lineup of its top-selling Innova with the addition of three new variants: the Innova High-end V-grade that comes in either diesel or gasoline engine (both using automatic transmission) and the E-grade (also automatic).

The TMPC considers its High-end V-grade, which sells at P1.144 million (diesel) and P1.083 million (gas), as a more affordable alternative to the company's luxury minivan Previa, that sells twice as much.

The High-end V-grade is equipped with captain seats at the rear as well as leather seat material, ABS and airbags for the driver and passenger side.

Technological advancements

Also, the motorshow presented Toyota's latest technological advancements as represented by the i-unit concept vehicle and the 2nd Generation Prius Hybrid Car flown directly from Japan.

The i-unit is a futuristic model that gives a whole new perspective to the term motor vehicle. Made almost entirely of bio-plastics and composites derived from corn, sugarcane, and the African kenaf plant, the i-unit runs entirely on electric and thus, emits nothing but soft hums and whirs.

Designed to resemble a tree leaf, the i-unit combines "drive-by-wire" technology and information technology. An orb-like controller at the tip of the right-hand armrest controls direction, speed and braking with a tug up and down or by twisting it left and right—no more steering, stepping on foot pedals, or looking at the dashboard.

But while it would take years, if not decades, before we could see an i-unit zooming on the highway, Toyota made sure it is going in the right direction toward sustainable mobility by coming up with the world's first mass-produced hybrid vehicle nine years ago.

Second generation

Now on its second generation, the Toyota Prius is the world's best-selling hybrid, selling more than 600,000 around the world.

The Prius is built on something Toyota calls "Hybrid Synergy Drive," which means that power comes from two sources: a 1.5-liter internal combustion engine and a 50-kilowatt electrical motor.

The vehicle's assorted processors and sensors constantly manipulate both power sources for highest fuel efficiency without sacrificing performance. But such swapping happens so seamlessly that you never notice the changes, except when you look at the dashboard display.

Moreover, the Prius' regenerative braking system uses the car's electric motor as a generator to snatch the kinetic force and turn it into electricity to charge the nickel-metal hydride batteries, which are then used to propel the car, which then uses its own motion to recharge the batteries, and so on, in an endless loop of efficiency.

"With the display of the Prius and the i-unit at the 2nd World of Toyota Motor Show, Toyota aims to promote public awareness on the future of mobility, and how Toyota is doing its best to come up with better technologies and even new ideas that lead to a much better world for the motorists," Isla said.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

TOYOTA CLASSICS
A World of Harmony

Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra

Ayako Takagi
flute

Tatsuya Shimono
conductor

Jovianney Emmanuel Cruz
pianist

An elegant evening of incomparable Mozart music.

In 2006, we invite you to the 17th presentation of the Toyota Classics.
In celebration of the 250th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,
the first half of the concert will feature incomparable Mozart music, followed by an anthology
of world-famous classical selections. The full Nagoya Philharmonic Orchestra will be
performing, which promises the evening of vibrant music of the highest international caliber.
The orchestra will be under the baton of Maestro Tatsuya Shimono, an award-winning conductor
acclaimed at the Besançon International Competition for Young Conductors in France.
The soloist at the gala performance will be flutist Ayako Takagi,
one of the most sought-after performers of her generation.
Come join us for an elegant evening of Mozart, the finest composer of his era,
and an anthology of world-renowned classical music.
The concert will also present a performance from world-renowned Filipino pianist,
Mr. Jovianney Emmanuel Cruz.

Toyota Classics 2006

October 24, 2006 (Tuesday) 8:00 PM
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Tickets are available at selected National Bookstore branches, Robinson's Department Store (Malate, Galleria, Pampanga, Cavite and Festival Mall), Tower Records (Makati and Alabang), Ayala Center Inc., Greenbelt 1 Ticket Booth Cinema Lobby, Glorietta 1 Ticket Booth Cinema Lobby and on the TicketWorld website found at www.ticketworld.com.ph. Call 891-9999 for inquiry and reservation.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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The best rivalry in the tech world

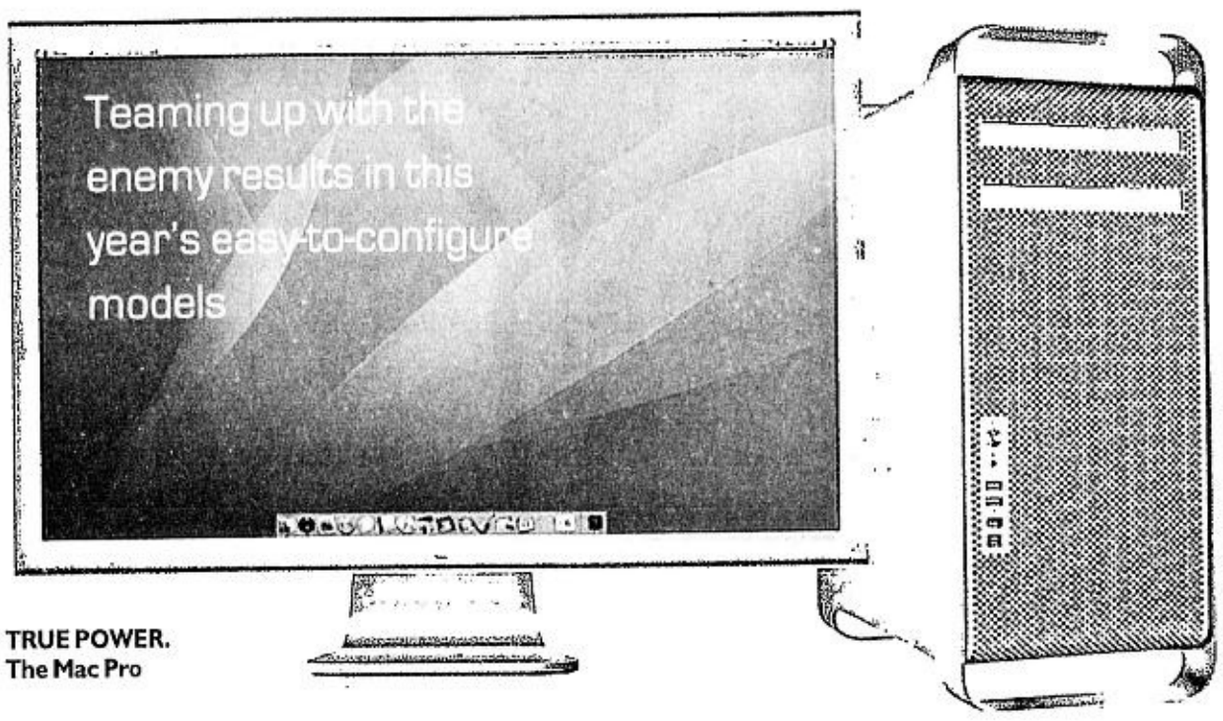
By Gabriel H. Mercado
2bU! Contributor

BILL GATES IS THE MOST successful person in the computer industry. But the most influential in terms of computer design and style is Apple Computer's Steve Jobs.

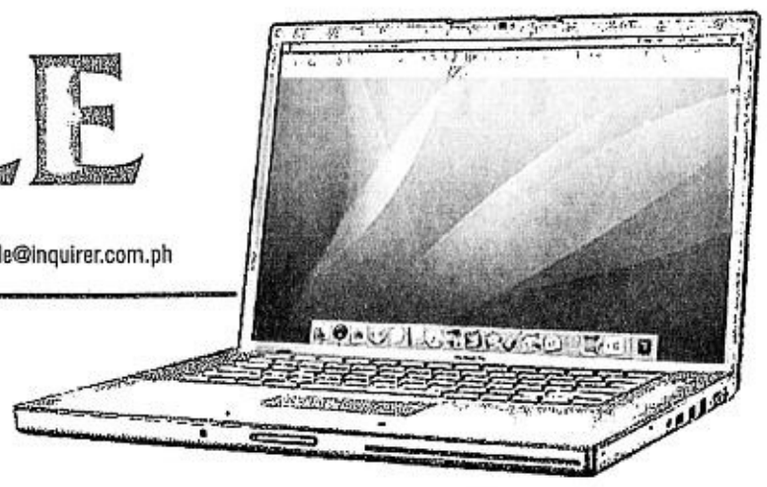
While Gates has made billions on functional software that has set standards for office functions, Jobs has gone on a different route, introducing style and élan into an industry whose very nature shuns fancy accoutrements and fittings that contradict ideals of productivity and efficiency.

Jobs has made his fortune on providing the unthinkable: stylish but powerful machines in inspired shapes, in sparkling white or lush colors, shaped the way a user—not a system administrator or a programmer—would imagine a computer to be. Rabid Mac user groups all over the world attest to Jobs' success.

Remember Elle (played by Reese Witherspoon) in "Legally Blonde"? She wants a "tangerine" iBook, and it stands out in a sea of black IBM ThinkPads. Hers is a style statement while achieving arguably the same goals.



TRUE POWER. The Mac Pro



THE MACBOOK 17" is a standout.

MacBook 17"

The latest Mac Pro 17" continues along the style path of Jobs. From the moment you take it out of its glittering gold box, it stands out from the many laptops I've reviewed in the past.

Full-size speakers at both sides surround a full-size, easy-to-use keyboard. Everything is in place, no extra button to confuse or divert your attention from the task at hand.

Not that anything can distract you, mind you, from the gargantuan 17" inches of LCD display that greets you after a mere 10-second boot up.

So it looks good, but can it fly? Well, this isn't the top-of-the-line for nothing. The A 2.16 Ghz Intel Core Duo powers this beauty, cached along with 1 GB of RAM. A 5400 rpm 120-GB hard disk will store your stuff, and a slot-loading 8x Superdrive (DVD+R DL/DVD±RW/CD-RW) provide more storage.

Other features: Wifi, a built-in iSight video camera, a Gigabit Ethernet Port, three USB 2.0 ports, one FireWire 800 port, and one

THE BEST/ C3

"Night or day, I can call any branch of Gerry's Grill including one in Union City, California.

Buti na lang the lines are clear for local and IDD calls kasi ang O.C. ko when I check on operations."

Sonia V. Reducindo
Director of Operations
Gerry's Grill

Sonia checks on 21 branches anytime. And she can stay on her Sun phone extensively monitoring stock inventory and nerve-wracking set-ups for emergency banquets. In one case, a very demanding client ordered dinner for 100 heads in an hour's notice. The rush 7-course meal turned out to be a huge success. All coordination was done by phone since everyone in Sonia's team is equipped with Sun phones. Sun works well for this iron lady and her iron chefs.

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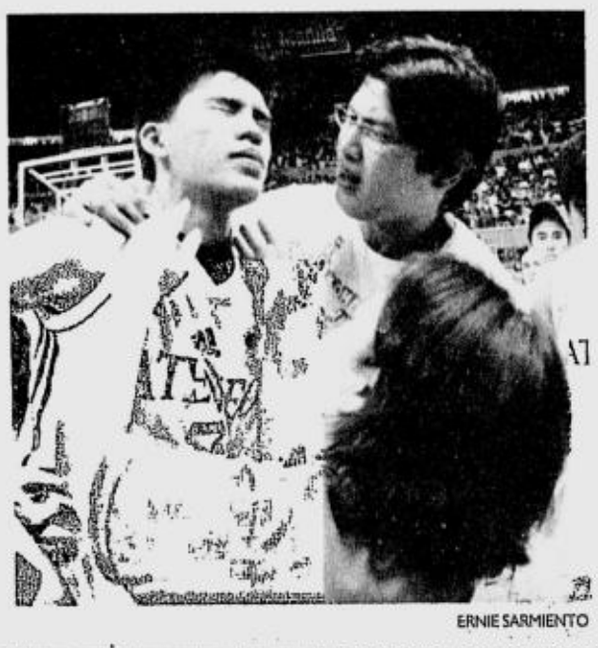
Triumph and tragedy, and everything in between

FRAN KATIGBAK



ERNIE SARMIENTO

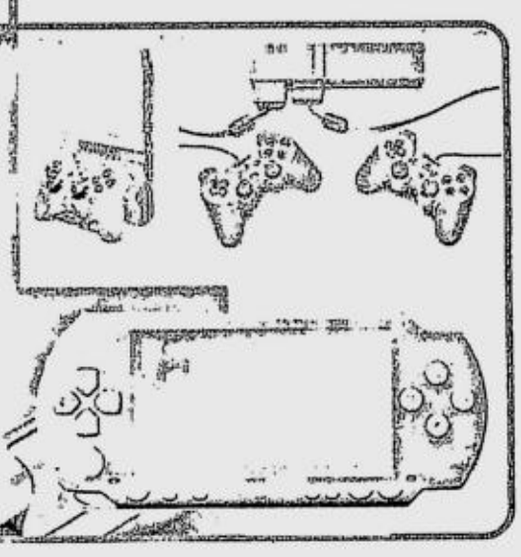
THE UAAP BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP. No place was hotter than the Araneta Coliseum last Monday. The place was packed and overflowing with students in yellow and blue. Congratulations to the UST Tigers and the Ateneo Blue Eagles for a so-exciting-it-was-almost-excruciating-to-watch overtime game. Check out next week's 2bU! for a full spread on this year's NCAA and UAAP champions, the San Beda Red Lions and the UST Tigers.

THIS YEAR IS A GREAT YEAR FOR "THE AMAZING RACE." Not only has the 10th season gotten off to a good start (we love the variety of teams and the promise of surprises), "The Amazing Race Asia" is also set to begin airing later this year. We can't wait to see Pinoy contestants Aubrey Miles, Ernie Lopez, and their teammates in action.

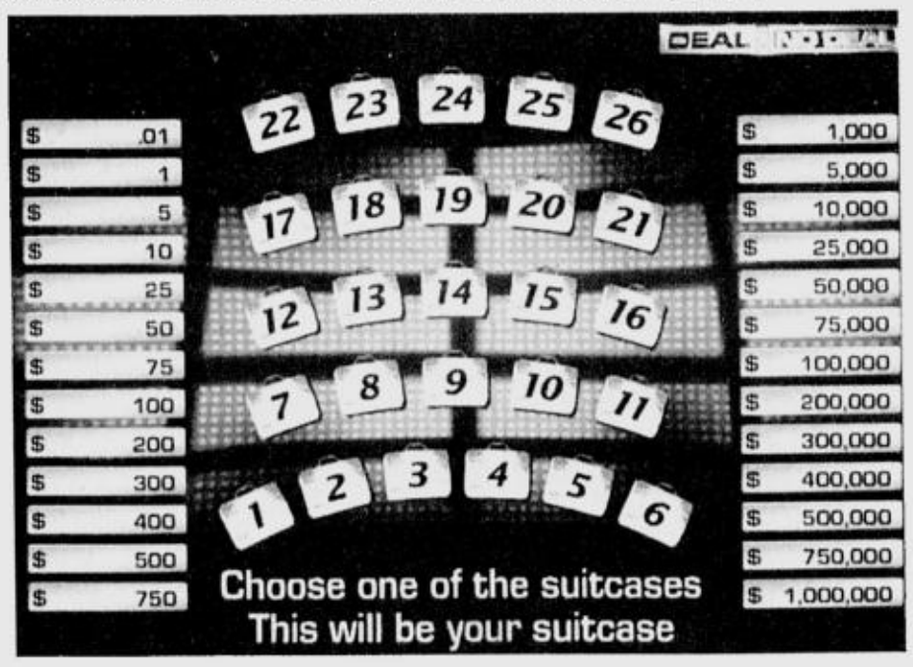
"THE DEPARTED." Martin Scorsese plus Leonardo DiCaprio plus Jack Nicholson plus Matt Damon plus Mark Wahlberg plus Martin Sheen plus Alec Baldwin equals one hot movie. The movie, a remake of the Hong Kong film "Internal Affairs," is a police thriller about the battle between a state police force and an Irish-American organized crime gang. The movie is over two hours long and will keep you glued to your seat.

MISS WORLD. Hurrah for beauty contests that also put the focus on other aspects of a woman's life. Two of Miss World's fast-track events—a sports competition and a review of the contestants' charity work—show that they are searching for beauty that isn't just skin-deep. Maybe beauty contests of the future would feature a quiz round?

SAY GOODBYE TO YOUR NO-RICE DIET. McDonald's rice burgers are hot, in all senses of the word. There are two variants—Chicken Supreme and Beef Supreme—and we're clucking for the chicken. Call 8-Mcdo for deliveries.



TECH COMPANIES ARE THINKING PINK. Pink laptops, pink gaming consoles, pink music players, pink mobile phones. Elle Woods and Barbie would be proud.



DEAL OR NO DEAL, THE ONLINE VERSION. Now you can practice before coming face-to-face with Kris Aquino and asking her to open those cash-loaded suitcases. Google the words "deal or no deal game" for various versions.

LONELY GIRL IS NOT REALLY LONELY. For weeks, Youtube addicts viewed the video blog of Bree, also known as lonelygirl15. Some of them began to have suspicions about the real identity of the girl behind the Internet drama, and a few weeks ago, the truth was revealed, thanks to tech-savvy amateur sleuths.

BREE IS ACTUALLY JESSICA ROSE, an actress from New Zealand who is trying to make it in Hollywood. The Lonely Girl videos are part of a creative project, an experiment of sorts which might later on become a movie. No one feels sillier than the fans who have been duped. As for Jessica Rose, her photos are now plastered all over the Internet.

TOURISTS IN SPACE. The world's first female space tourist and fourth commercial space traveler Anousheh Ansari is back on earth after an 11-day trip to the International Space Station.

ANOUSHEH STAYED CONNECTED TO THE WORLD BY BLOGGING FROM SPACE. Visit her blog at http://space-blog.xprize.org/. We're sure many other people would love to give space tourism a shot—if only it didn't cost over $20 million to make that dream come true.

TRAFFIC TRAGEDY. It was a story that sounded like it came straight out of a movie. Two men got into a traffic altercation and one shot the other. The victim died and the man with the gun was jailed. The victim's brothers paid him a visit and shot him dead, too. Two deaths and so many lives altered, just because of the annoying traffic. Don't let it happen to you. Swallow the bitter pill, keep it cool, stop the violence.

MILENYO LEFT SO MUCH DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION. Lives were lost, properties damaged, trees uprooted, and so many homes left without electricity. It was also a wake-up call. It showed us how dependent we've become on technology, and left us with a big question: Just how ready are we for disaster?

The best rivalry in the tech world

From page C1

FireWire 400 port, a DVI-out port for external display, a scrolling TrackPad, illuminated keyboard with ambient light sensor, and infrared Apple Remote, powered along by a 68-watt hour lithium polymer battery.

If those don't make sense to you, show them to a techie friend and watch his jaw drop.

There is an outstanding collection of software that comes along with it called iLife, free with the operating system. Here you'll get a powerful desktop search tool in Spotlight, an RSS reader for the blog addicts, Chat software in iChat, an e-mail client in Mail and a browser in Safari.

You'll also get Quicktime to view movies and videos, an Automator to help relieve repetitive tasks, and a Dashboard to help you get a bird's eyeview on things.

In other words, you're ready to use it from the get-go, hopefully with as little need to download or install more software once you start it. This is one of the major selling points of the Mac as well, in response to its rival Window's need for constant tweaking and to possibly help win a few converts, too.

All this for P176,890, which is the suggested retail price.

Mac Pro

While the MacBook is beautiful and powerful, true power still belongs to the desktops, and as such, hardly anything can compare to the new Mac Pro workstations, featuring the first ever implementation of Intel 64 bit Xeon Processors in a Quad (2 2.66 GHz Dual Core) setup.

The Mac Pro has two 2.66 GHz Dual-Core Intel Xeon processors, 1GB of 667 MHz DDR2 fully buffered ECC memory expandable up to 16GB, and an NVIDIA GeForce 7300 GT with 256MB of GDDR2 SDRAM video card.

Storage is provided by a 250-gb Serial ATA (3 gb/s) hard drive running at 7200 rpm, and a 16x SuperDrive with double-layer support (DVD+R DL/DVD±RW/CD-RW).

You can add more devices with four PCI Express slots, one double-wide graphics slot and three full-length expansion slots, while maintaining control with the standard Mighty Mouse and Apple Keyboard.

With this year's models, there is emphasis on ease of configuration as they adapt a cable-less design, making the innards cleaner and allowing for better airflow for cooling.

There is a software configurable bandwidth meter to control the PCI slots, while those interested in going even faster will like the software configurable RAID controls that ship with the OS.

The Mac Pro ships with specs above priced at P159,190, with a selection of monitors from the 30-inch Cinema HD Display with an industry-leading 2560-by-1600 pixel resolution, available for P129,690; and the 23-inch Cinema HD Display with a 1920-by-1200 pixel resolution, ideal for editing High-Definition Television (HDTV) content, priced at P64,490.

The 20-inch Cinema Display is now just P45,690, and offers a 1680-by-1050 pixel resolution, more than enough space to edit full-size images with plenty of room for on-screen palettes.

Madrigals in concert

THE PHILIPPINE Madrigal Singers will be featured in a special concert, "MADZitawanan," on Oct. 8 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Theater at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

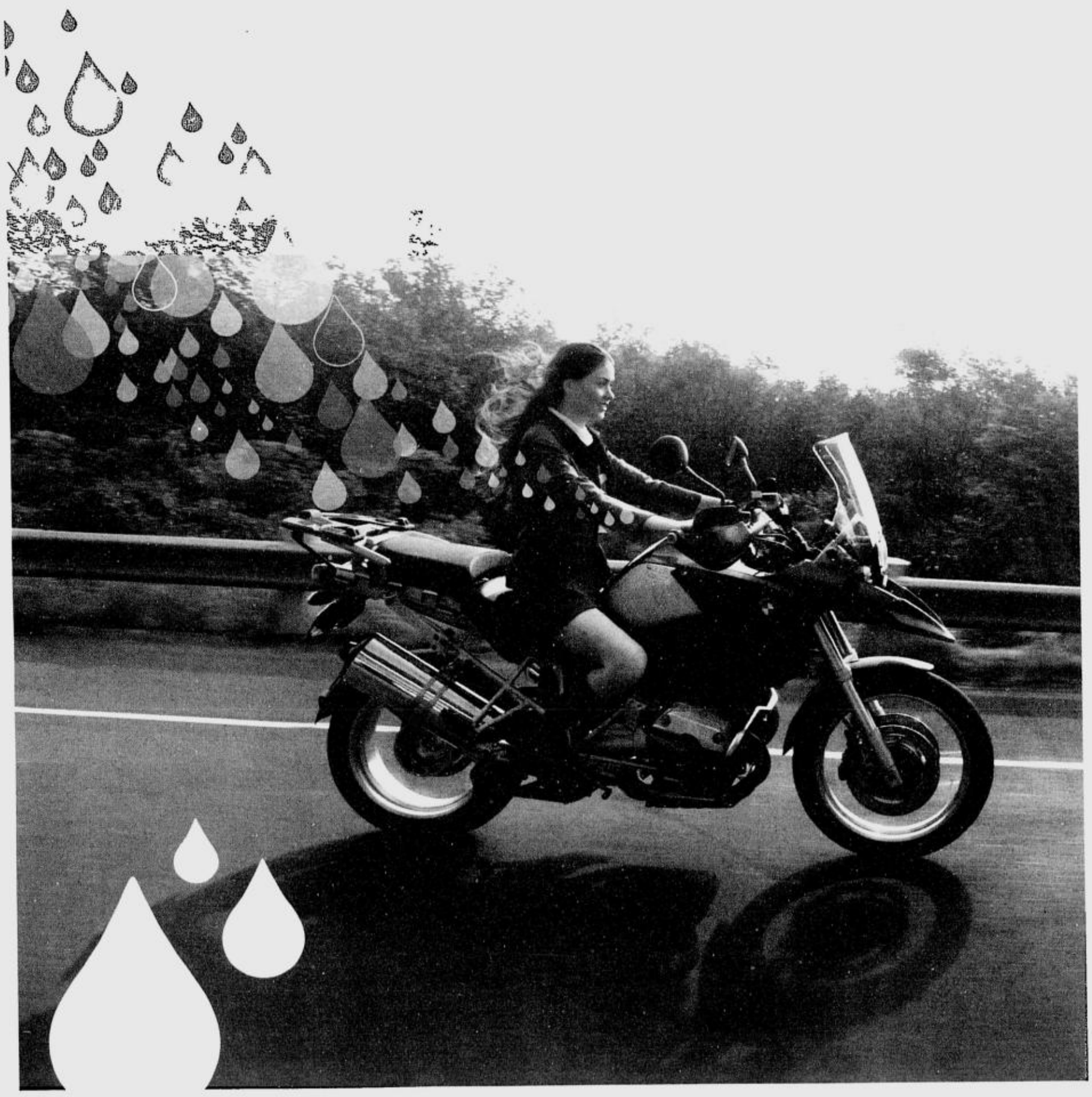
The show was scheduled on Oct. 1, but was postponed due to typhoon Milenyo.

The Madz won the Grand Prix in the Florilege Vocal de Tours international tilt in France last June.

"MADZitawanan" is presented by the Cultural Center of the Philippines in cooperation with the Ellinwood Malate Church, the Rizal Commercial Banking Corporation and Philippine Long Distance Co.

Proceeds of the concert will go to the ministries and projects of the Ellinwood Malate Church, which is celebrating its 99th founding anniversary on Oct. 15.

Tickets are available at the CCP box office (8321125), the Ellinwood Malate Church (5232884, 5236564 or 0918-9372055) and Ticket World outlets (8919999).



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MORE THAN QUENCHING THIRST

We know The Coca-Cola Company as the maker of the well-loved Coca-Cola. But it is more than just that. It's an organization dedicated to the Filipino consumer. As it offers a wide portfolio of beverages, The Coca-Cola Company also supports programs that provide education, promote a healthy lifestyle and protect the environment. These programs help a number of individuals and families here and around the world.

ENJOY LIFE TO THE FULLEST

Being healthy is all about making the right choices. But choosing a life of balance can sometimes be tough, specially when you have to make sacrifices. It's a good thing there's Coca-Cola Light. It's words of encouragement rather than words of caution. It's a "yes" instead of a "no". It's getting the best out of life with no sacrifice. Because with Coca-Cola Light, you get that refreshing taste you love and none of the calories. You don't. No wonder you can go all out and enjoy every drop that life has to offer.

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MOBILE MUSIC. Nokia's new phones may just take your mp3 player's place.

Songs in the key of Easy

Nokia introduces new music handsets that will definitely top the charts

By Tammy David
2bU! Correspondent

YOU KNOW TIMES ARE changing when answers to the popular slambook question, "What can't you leave the house without?" is a gadget rather than things like house keys or money.

Or when you see more girls trade in their dainty bags for bigger purses to house their digital cameras, mp3 players, mobile phones and, of course, the *kikay*/vanity kit.

That's right, we now live in a world where people want to be reached, entertained and connected anytime, anywhere.

NOKIA 5300

Luckily, Nokia continues to provide its consumers with exciting new models to fit their multimedia lifestyles.

Nokia has come a long way from merely providing unique ring tones and pioneering integrated music players such as the popular 5510 and 8310.

At a recent regional product launch in Manila, Nokia Music Connects unveiled new music handsets that are designed to top the charts with their solid features, youthful style and attractive pricing.

Compact design

Headlining the new collection is the Nokia 5300 XpressMusic. Its compact, sleek slide design and dedicated music control hard keys definitely bring sexy back. Playback time of up to 12 hours can last you a bus trip, plus it supports MicroSD cards up to 2GB. That is enough for numerous playlists, or some 1,500 songs with formats ranging from mp3, WMA, M4A, AAC, AAC+ and eAAC+.

Of course, what's a hip new Nokia handset without additional features such as instant messaging, e-mail, Bluetooth, USB and integrated handsfree speaker? The Nokia 5300 also includes a 1.3-megapixel camera with 8x digital zoom for users to take and share snapshots anytime, anywhere. Colors available are red and dark gray.

Updated version

Next in line is the updated version of the Nokia 3250, first introduced last April. Like its big brother, its unique feature is the three twists to switch modes of operation, from phone function to play music or take photos.

The 3250 is also known for features such as the 2-megapixel camera with 4x digital zoom, stereo FM Radio playback and versatile S60 smart phone functionalities.

Playback time of this pocket DJ is up to 10 hours. Like the Nokia 5300, it also supports microSD cards up to 2GB, an upgrade from the previous 1GB capacity, as well as a wide range of music file formats. Songs can be easily organized with the help of the Nokia Audio Manager.

Additional features of the 3250 include PC applications to manage downloads and sync, and full-speed USB to transfer multimedia files in a zap.

For more information, log on to www.nokia-asia.com

E-mail the author at tammy-david@gmail.com

THE NEW and improved Nokia 3250

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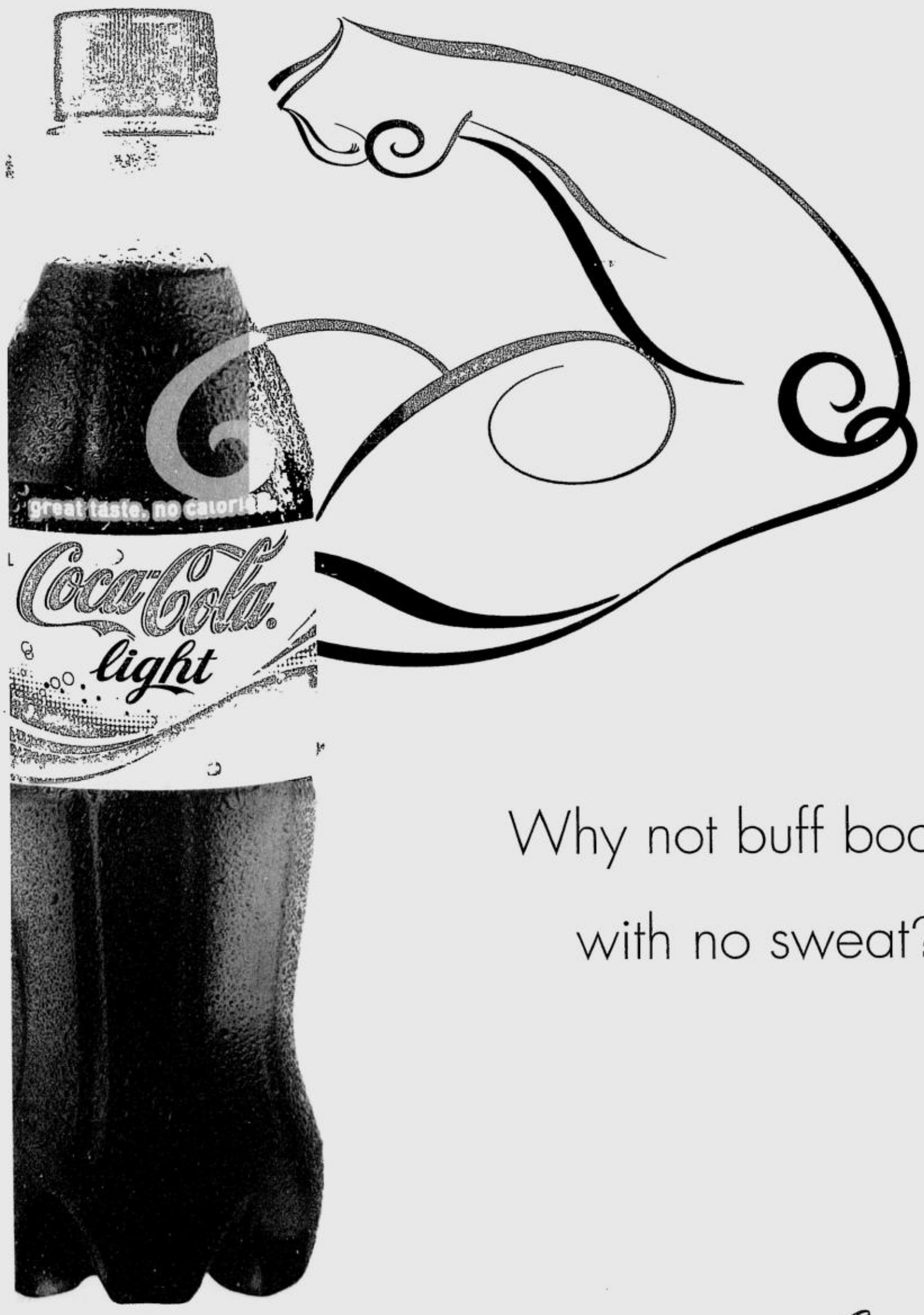
no calories.



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Nursing is life

By Ma. Carina V. Maravilla

WHEN I WAS A KID, I looked down on nurses. During visits to my pediatrician, I would see their tacky white outfits with matching white shoes and I thought it was a job for people who liked to clean up for others. In short, *pang-katulong*.

Back then, my idea of a dream job was to wear mini-miniskirts to the office à la Ally McBeal. I wanted to be a lawyer. But when the time for college application came, I was just like most young people, totally clueless.

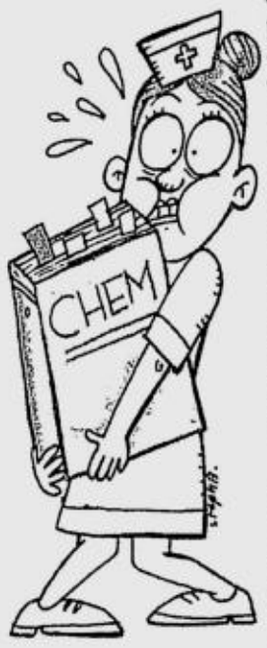
WHAT IT'S LIKE

After receiving two rejection letters from my choice schools, my nursing life was born. Just like that.

I couldn't imagine myself as a nurse. My friends were all shocked. Knowing the *kikay*, mall-rat, every-hair-in-place personality that I possessed, they couldn't believe it.

But on the contrary, it was as if there was a greater force that destined me to be in this profession. My family is a family of nurses. And I tell you, I have a lot of relatives. Must be in the blood.

On my first day in school, I couldn't believe the number of impeccably dressed student nurses I saw, all of them spic and span from head to toe. I couldn't even bring myself to wear the prescribed uniform, which was a straight-cut, button-down white dress with "flipper" arms. Instead, I opted to go with my jeans and pink tank top. At that time, freshman students were allowed to wear civilian clothes for the first day of school (My classmates and I chose to wear it for a week).



I saw the girls who would go on their hospital duty with their hair tied in a bun, apron on top of their white uniform, plus nameplate, white stockings and white shoes. I thought, it must be a really hot outfit. I also thought the few guy students I saw on campus were probably gay.

Tough year

My first year in college was probably the toughest. I was still in a state of denial as I wore my lecture uniform of white dress and black shoes for the first time. I was counting on being reconsidered for UP, my dream school. (I got in, but the letter came too late, I was enrolled and settled already).

I was constantly worried about grades and not making it to the cut-off, so I worked my ass off literally and figuratively. Of course, prayers were the No. 1 priority, for when you have three exams scheduled in a day and you studied inadequately, you'd definitely pray for your life.

It was hard. I learned how to stay up late studying chemical equations, which I hated and could never comprehend. I learned how to give up watching "Sex and the City" so I could study. I learned to turn down high school friends asking me out for gimmicks.

I remember talking to my Chemistry professor to help me get a good grade, at least a passing one. I was used to being on top of my class in elementary and high school. What was my grade? 73.8. I swear I'll never forget receiving that small sheet of paper containing that grade.

But my professor merely said, "*Tataas pa 'yan.*" I was like, "*E, mam, kahit anung gawin kong aral ganun pa rin eh.*" She replied, "*Tataas pa 'yan.*"

For I was not the only one experiencing agony. The rest of my batchmates could relate to the experience of preparing for a mind-boggling report in Chemistry and getting a zero on a post-test.

Passing the cut-off grade upon entering second year was a relief. I never would have made it without the help of my guidance counselor, parents and God. I thought, maybe now I could relax.

But no. For this was the year we were required to go on our hospital duty for the first time. I didn't even know we were supposed to tie our hair up on the first day of duty.

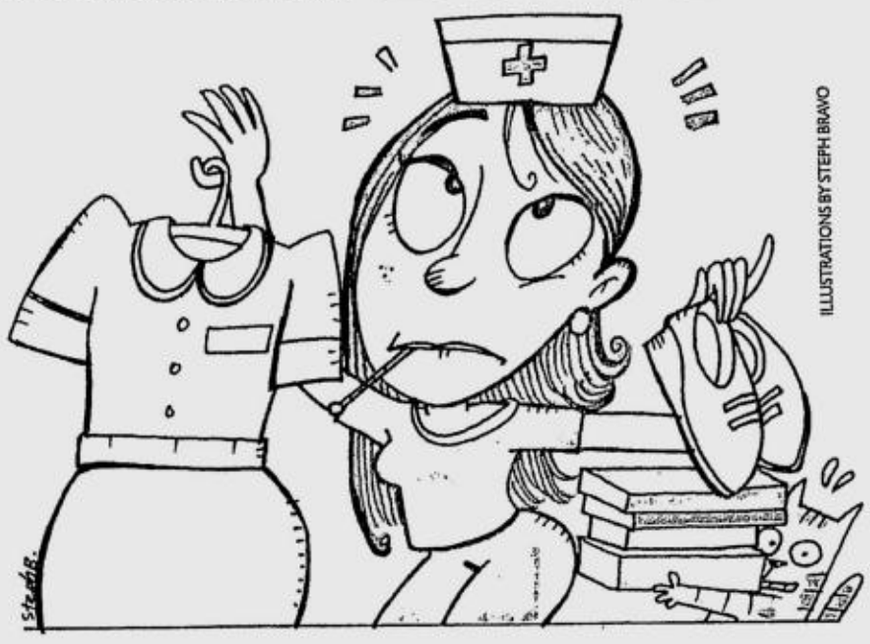
The first lesson we had was temperature taking. Surprisingly, my oral temperature was 37.5°C, slightly feverish. I didn't exactly know what triggered it—my sudden high level of anxiety perhaps or the fact that I ate spicy *siomai* that morning. I kept the *siomai* thing to myself.

My hospital duties were such an experience. I met people from all walks of life. We were also assigned to be in a group, and these people later became my closest buddies ever. We went to patients as one group, like a cheering squad, and we helped each other get through difficult tasks. We went to provinces to do not one, but two research papers. We did everything we had to do, and more. We became friends.

> There is nothing more fulfilling than seeing a patient get better because of how you cared for him

It was during this school year, too, when I experienced my firsts. First injection (I aced the return demonstration, but had a hard time with the orange, definitely not my favorite fruit), first bed-making (body mechanics!), first time to take blood pressure

NURSING/D4



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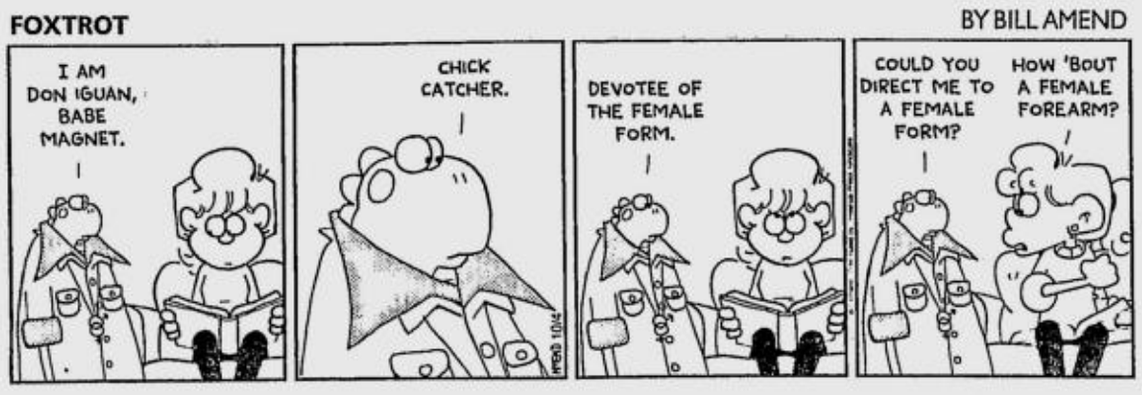
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND



A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE

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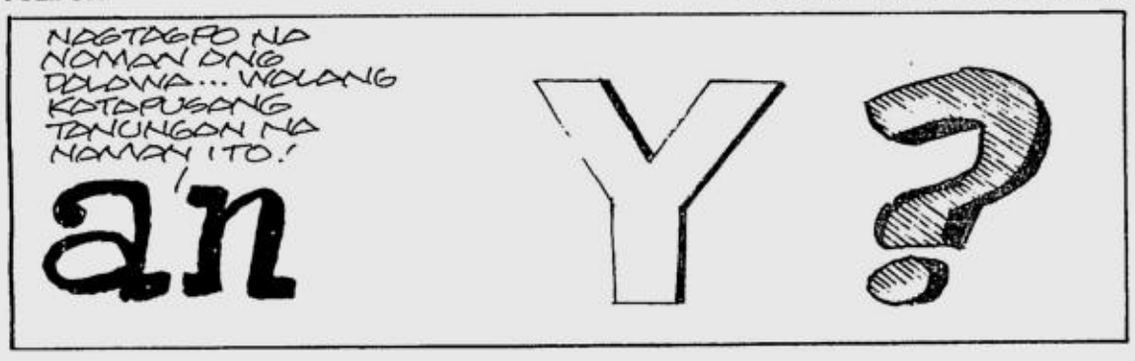
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



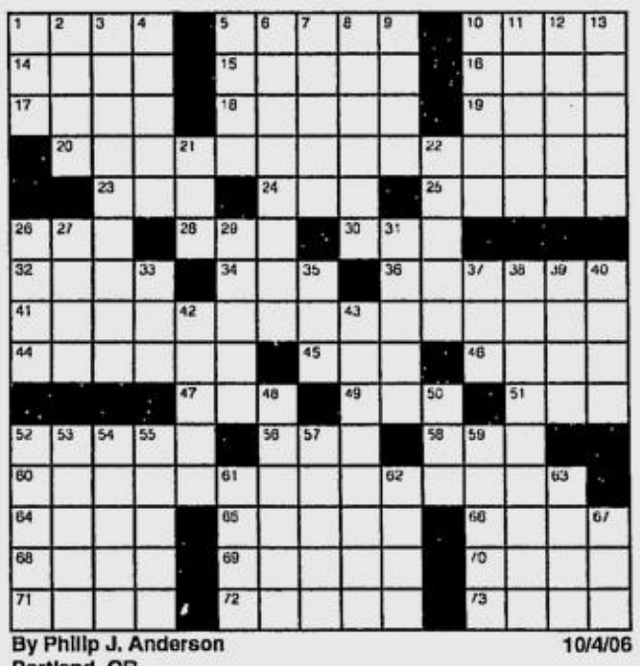
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Clayey soil
5 Throat warmer
10 Con job
14 Ultimatum word
15 "Iliad" writer
16 Perry's creator
17 Cartoonist Groening
18 "Fear of Flying" author Jong
19 Stir up
20 Agreement that may not hold up in court
23 Lobster eggs
24 Evening in an ode
25 Motel posting
26 MIV halved
28 Ike's WW2 command
30 Letters in theater lobbies
32 Once, once
34 Mich. neighbor
36 Slip by
41 Keep in mind
44 Open __!
45 Kid
46 Four ounces
47 Minute amount
49 Jurisprudence
51 Plea at sea
52 East German secret police
56 Supped
58 Funny Philips
60 Suggested improvement for 20A and 41A
64 Purim month
65 Home or bed follower
66 Irritate
68 Innermost part
69 Seething
70 OT score, initially
71 __ go bragh!
72 Rice liquors
73 Unit of force

DOWN
1 NASA's moon vehicle
2 Norwegian saint
3 Text stars
4 Paris subway
5 Long Island stadium
6 Puzo's don
7 Liturgical vestment
8 Scout's missions
9 Humorist Lebowitz
10 Junipero __
11 Serb's neighbor
12 Mrs. Kramden
13 Thaws
21 Pollinator
22 Fairy-tale beast
26 Sen. group
27 "Dies __" (day of wrath)
29 Marisa of "My Cousin Vinny"
31 Spanish lariat
33 Lipton product
35 Explosive initials
37 Director Lee
38 Rash-producing plant
39 Normandy town
40 Congers
42 External boundary
43 Abide
48 Hindu writings
50 Dampen
52 Elbow room
53 English dynasty
54 Early arcade name
55 Seductress
57 Fine-tune
59 Bogged down
61 Egyptian goddess
62 Mid-March
63 Singer Campbell
67 Compass dir.



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
10/4/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

B	R	A	C	E		T	A	R	P	S		E	A	R
I	O	W	A	N		I	C	A	L	L		I	L	E
P	L	A	S	T	I	C	S	T	A	Y		D	E	I
E	L	I	C	I	T	S		I	C	E	B	E	R	G
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			D	E	A	N	A		S	P	E	D		
H	U	M	E		C	U	R	E		E	W	O	K	S
A	M	I		B	A	B	Y	S	I	T		W	I	T
M	A	L	T	A		S	A	S	S		S	N	A	P
		K	U	R	T		N	O	R	A	H			
C	A	S	T		E	O	N		A	M	A	N	D	A
S	C	H	U	L	T	Z		D	E	B	R	I	E	F
P	T	A		I	R	A	R	O	L	L	O	V	E	R
A	O	K		M	I	R	E	D		E	N	E	R	O
N	N	E		A	S	K	T	O		D	A	N	E	S

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10/4/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have excellent taste, and you appreciate beautiful things. You like harmony, and are pleasant to others. Nevertheless, you're forceful and direct! (You rule with a velvet glove.) You're not afraid to take a risk. People are attracted to your humor and your modern ideas. Work hard this year for rewards in 2007.
Birthdate of: Susan Sarandon, actress; Rachael Leigh Cook, actress; Ann Rice, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You'll do whatever you can today to help a partner or close friend. Perhaps you will join with someone to help a third party. (You want to help someone in need.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Coworkers are sympathetic. You have a lot of energy to give to others today. People are grateful to have your help and support. (This pleases you.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Romance is very exciting in a beautiful, gentle way today. Your creative vibes are also hot! Time spent with children will definitely be rewarding.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel quite active at home today. Either you want to assist a family member in some way, or you're using a lot of energy to make where you live look more beautiful. You're willing to put others first.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Today you have an opportunity to persuade others to take the high road about something. You want people to work for the highest good. (You might discuss this with a sibling or relative.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You want to buy something luxurious and extravagant! If you can swing it, why not? You're very focused on shopping and buying things for yourself and loved ones now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You feel romantic, sympathetic, empathetic and interested in beauty and pleasure today. (It's a Walt Disney moment.) Enjoy good times with children and friends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You easily put the interests of others before your own today. This is not because you're a martyr; it's because you genuinely care about those who are less fortunate than you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Friends and groups are extremely supportive of you today. In fact, one friend in particular really pulls through for you where it means a lot.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Group activities, especially charitable events, will appeal to you today. You want to think you can do something to help make the world a better place.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Your idealism is aroused today! You will definitely work on behalf of others. You have an opportunity to persuade people who have influence to do so as well.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You want to escape the boring, humdrum routine of your day. You want to be in a movie! Any diversion, excitement or adventure will appeal to you now.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

							1	
4	8		6			5	7	
	5	2	3	1		8		
						2	8	
		7				9		
	4	6						
		8		9	2	4	6	
	6	9			4		3	8
	1							

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/04

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

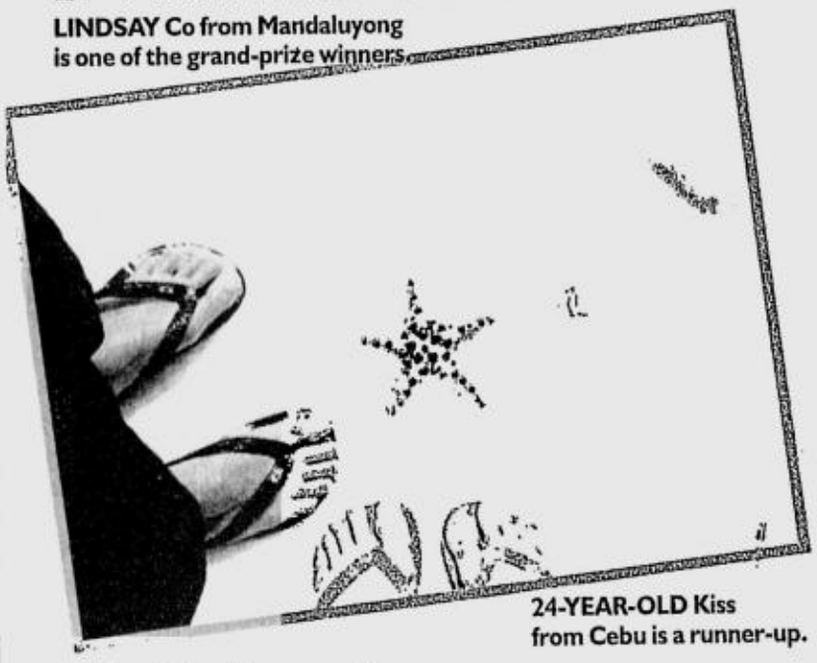
Answer to previous puzzle

1	9	4	5	2	8	3	7	6
5	7	3	4	9	6	2	8	1
6	2	8	3	1	7	4	9	5
7	4	5	9	8	2	6	1	3
2	8	6	7	3	1	9	5	4
3	1	9	6	4	5	8	2	7
9	3	1	2	7	4	5	6	8
8	6	2	1	5	3	7	4	9
4	5	7	8	6	9	1	3	2

Difficulty Level ★★

LINDSAY Co from Mandaluyong is one of the grand-prize winners.

26-YEAR-OLD Donna Nebre from Pasig is a grand-prize winner.



24-YEAR-OLD Kiss from Cebu is a runner-up.

MICHELLE Go from Cebu wins a Havaianas shirt.

18-YEAR-OLD Romir Francis Lao To from UST is one of the runners-up.

REI.IANE Madrid, 22, from DLSU, bagged the grand prize.

We have the winners!

2BU! ASKED YOU to show us how much you love your Havaianas by sending us creative photos of you with your favorite pairs.

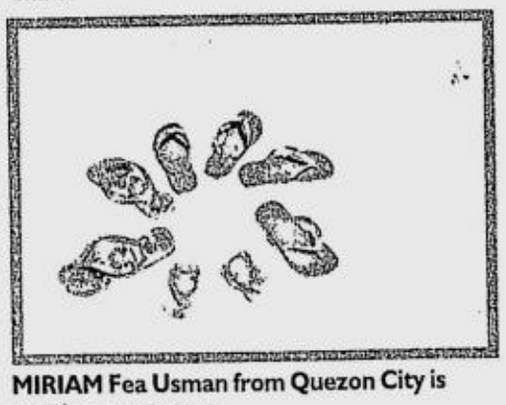
Your entries flooded our inbox and weeks after screening them, the winners have finally been chosen.

Three grand-prize winners will win a specially made Swarovski-studded pair (if female) or a pair with limited-edition pins (if male), a Havaianas keychain and a Havaianas slipper bag from Havaianas Philippines. The five runners-up will win Havaianas shirts.

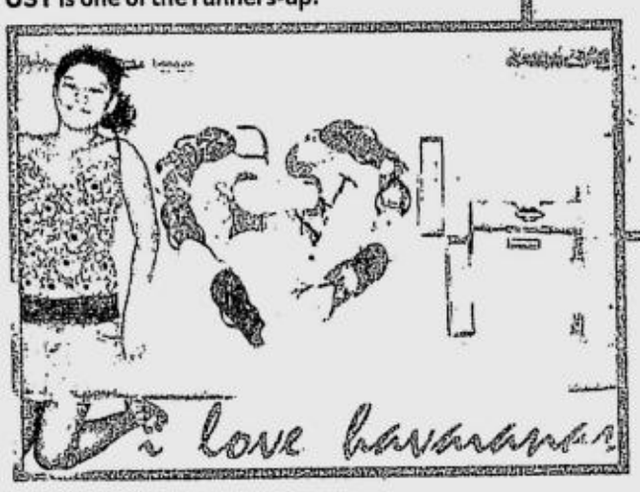
Spread the flip-flop love and visit the newly opened All Flip Flops' branch at the second floor of Alabang Town Center!

Winners will be contacted on how they can claim their prizes.

Keep reading 2bU! and win more exciting goodies.



MIRIAM Fea Usman from Quezon City is another runner-up.



JENYVI Apostol from Antipolo City will soon be wearing her special Havaianas shirt.

SWUP You Off Your Feet

ECN & PLDT pave the way for a cashless society

In what could prove to be the powerhouse team-up of the year, PLDT and Equitable Card Network, Inc. (ECN) recently signed a deal that has revolutionized the card payment industry towards a cashless society. Together, PLDT's Shops.Work UnPlugged (SWUP) provides an effective, reliable and secure wireless platform enabling Equitable to reaffirm its card acceptance market leadership and set a new trend for card payment lifestyle convenience and security.

Being the largest card acquirer in the country, ECN can now expand to more market acceptance of any Visa, MasterCard, JCB, and American Express cards anywhere the PLDT Group's mobile signal is present.

SWUP is the latest among a hot array of business solutions offered by PLDT. All customers have to do is swipe their credit or debit cards on SWUP Wireless Card Swipe terminals where their payments are instantly processed complete with a full receipt. Restaurant patrons, for example would never need to have their credit cards leave the table and instead pay their checks instantly, substantially reducing the risk of identity theft and table turnover time for establishments.

This prevents card numbers from being stolen while on the way to the restaurant cashiers; and avoids the queuing of credit card payments which need to be processed, resulting in a lot of idle tables. Paid patrons often get stuck at tables which could otherwise have been cleared for new customers.

PLDT Corporate Business Group Senior Vice President Eric R. Alberto pointed out that the SWUP-ECN agreement "moves us closer towards a shared vision of a cashless society, providing us an opportunity to further enable businesses on all levels. For ECN, SWUP expands its card acceptance to traditionally non-card channnels and opens up new business opportunities, allowing more people to enjoy the convenience of using card payments."

Ophelia Camiña, First Vice President of ECN said that the two companies "proceed towards a common goal of technology enhancement, it is this that gives us an edge in the industry. Such giants (PLDT and ECN) cannot fail."

(L-R) PLDT FVP and Head of Business Solutions, Nerisse Ramos, PLDT SVP and Head of CBG, Eric Alberto, Equitable Card Network First Vice- Presidents, Ophelia Camiña and Marili Tioseco.

ECN's partnership with PLDT has the potential to revolutionize the entire payment system of the country.
Standing L-R: PLDT Relationship Manager Jose Mari Javier, PLDT Business Head, Kat Luna-Abelarde, PLDT FVP, Cesar Enriquez, PLDT Business Head, Precy Katigbak, PLDT SWUP Product Manager, Jun Darjuan, Equitable Card Network Sales and Marketing AVP, Princess Cuenco, Equitable Card Network Systems AVP Edmund Chan, and PLDT Domestic Data Head, Vic Tria. Seated L-R: PLDT FVP and Head of Business Solutions, Nerisse Ramos, PLDT SVP and Head of CBG, Eric Alberto, and Equitable Card Network First Vice-Presidents Ophelia Camiña and Marili Tioseco.

Inexpensive and easy way to fair skin

GETTING FAIR AND glowing skin does not have to involve a considerable amount of money.

Crystal, a new product that is both a facial body mask and facial moisturizer, is cheap, convenient and free from adverse effects.

Crystal Facial Body Mask, made from natural clay, refines pores, detoxifies, whitens and revitalizes skin. Its ingredients include allantoin, bisabolol, D-panthenol, salicylic aid, aloe vera extract, witch hazel extract, ginseng extract, chamomile extract, natural clay, tea tree oil and lavender oil.

Crystal Facial Cream is enriched with kojic derivative, arbutin, alpha hydroxy acid and licorice extract that whitens, brightens, moisturizes and protects the skin from the sun. Its vitamins also help make the skin look young.

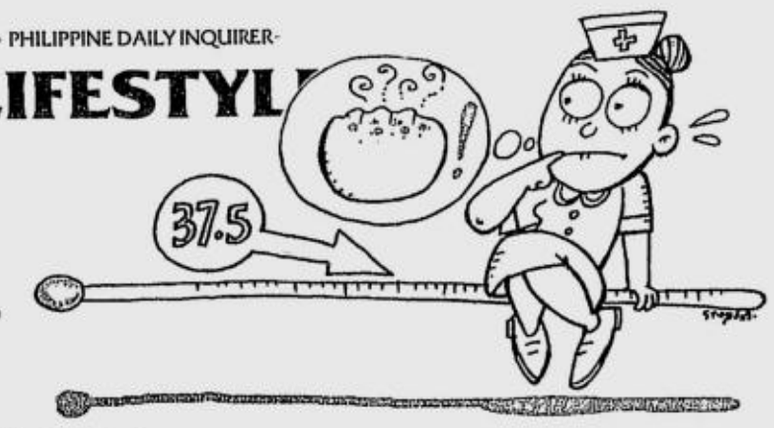
Crystal products are approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs.

See a difference after just two weeks of regular use. For inquiries, call 2510169.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Nursing is life

From page D1



correctly (my first try, I couldn't hear anything. I made my classmate's arm cyanotic—that's bluish in layman's term), first time to write on a patient's chart, first time to establish rapport with a patient, first time to bathe a patient.

Sacrifices

But there were also big sacrifices I had to make. I turned down two debuts of my friends, had to stay in a dorm during weekdays (I live far, so travel time was taking too much of my time). My social life became nonexistent. There were too many things to do with so little time! I was busy with readings, projects and duty hours. Weekends I spent preparing for the week's duty requirements.

I had to be punctual—an hour to 30 minutes before duty time, with all the necessary paraphernalia (small notebook, red, black and blue pens, pencil, eraser, ruler, bandage scissors, two thermometers, tape measure, stethoscope, blood pressure apparatus, penlight with battery). I had to wear my duty uniform neatly, and strictly with no accessories except for a wristwatch.

Aside from the duty uniform I mentioned, girls needed to wear chemise, and guys V-necked undershirts. I thought I could get away without the chemise, since it was so hot. But my clinical instructor found out and gave me 30 minutes' make-up duty on my first day! Which turned out to be four long hours. What could you do in 30 minutes, anyway?

Any failure to comply with the rules resulted in make-up duty, which could range from 30 minutes to a few days. During those days, I was extremely overwhelmed with all these to-dos, rules and policies to the point of suffocation. I never expected this. A speaker in a seminar said, "Nursing is worse than joining the PMA." True.

While my cousins told me how they partied all night in bars, watched gigs and the latest movies, I was in my dorm every night trying to catch some sleep, preparing for quizzes, or trying to cheer myself up over a low grade.

It was during my third and fourth years in college that I felt like giving up. Yes, there were good times, but no matter how hard you try, things don't always go as planned. A single mistake could end the life of a patient, so I had to be careful all the time.

There were times when theory and practice contradicted each other, and you had to decide what to do. Mistakes were inevitable, and a lot of times I found myself asking whether I was good enough.

You begin to ask whether it was worth all the pain, all the abuse you subject yourself to just to become a good nurse. Was I actually paying for my tuition just to wake up at 4 a.m., be out of the dorm by 5.30, and be scolded like a fool by my instructor?

Fulfillment

The answer, I've found out, is yes. For no matter how tired you are, how hard the job is, a smile or a thank you from a patient is worth every single obstacle you hurdle throughout your nursing life.

There is nothing more fulfilling than seeing a patient get better because of how you cared for him. It warms my heart to be in a profession that is, at the same time, a noble vocation. To borrow a statement from one of my favorite clinical instructors, it is in this profession where we see God through our patients and do good things for Him.

Making it through the board exams was the culmination of everything I had done and prepared for in my college life.

Today, I no longer look down on nurses. For I know that what they do—what we do—is not *pang-katulong*. It is a profession where lives begin, lives flourish and lives end. To have that power and responsibility in your hands is amazing. From my perspective, every aspect of nursing is life.

E-mail carina.maravilla@yahoo.com

The Real Causes of WOMEN'S HAIRLOSS

Hair can enhance or ruin a woman's appearance. Deemed her "crowning glory," thick, healthy, lush strands that frame a woman's face can emphasize her beauty and youth. On the contrary, hair loss can do the exact opposite. It can make a woman appear older and less attractive, which can cause low self-esteem, depression and isolation.

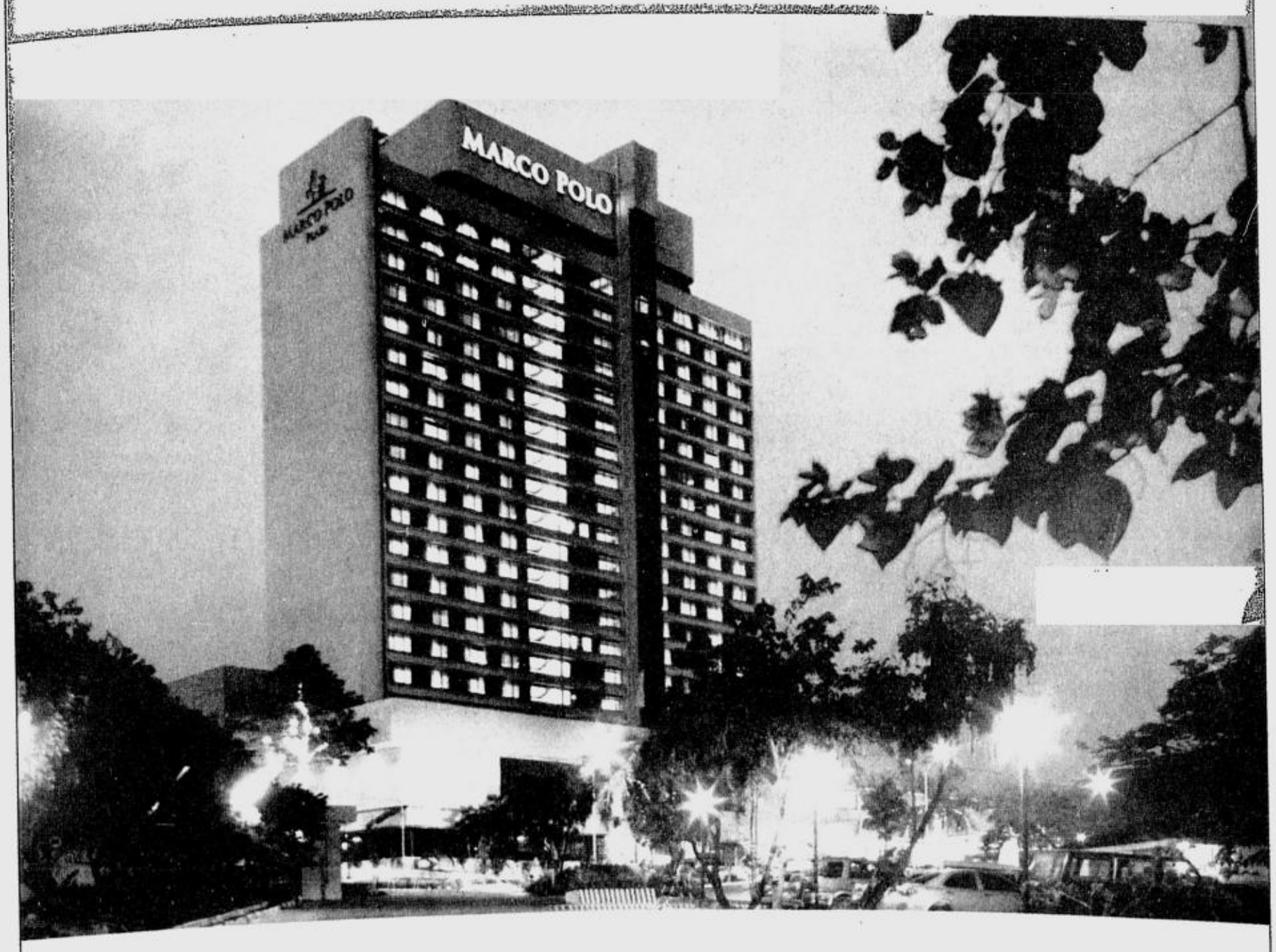
There are various triggers of women's baldness. Hormonal changes by far have the biggest impact since they stimulate hair growth *and* cause the actual hairloss. Female Pattern Baldness (or Androgenetic alopecia) is a reaction to male hormones in the body. It is an inherited sensitivity to the effects of male hormones (androgens) on scalp hair follicles.

Stress can also be a contributing factor to women's hairloss. This leads to a severe tension in the scalp, affecting the supply of essential nutrition required for the healthy growth of hair. Hair damage from the use of hair styling treatments and other chemicals also affects the hair condition, making the hair strands weak and causing them to break.

Svenson utilizes various treatments to help women avoid hairloss from occurring. In the case of hairloss that has already started, Svenson also has solutions to prevent it from progressing to more advanced hairloss. With Svenson, women not only get their hair back, they also look younger and better. Call Svenson today at 892-HAIR (4247) for a free consultation.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

The sky is the limit



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MARCO POLO
PLAZA
CEBU

Chris Botti in Manila!

SINCE RELEASING HIS FIRST album in 1995, trumpeter Chris Botti has carved his own niche in the world of contemporary jazz.

This October, we get to be his guests in intimate evenings of romance with "Chris Botti Live at the Ayala Malls."

A gifted instrumentalist, composer, and performer, Botti will perform at Ayala Center Cebu Oct. 27, 7:30-8:30 p.m., and Greenbelt 3, Makati, Oct. 28, 7-8 p.m.

Those familiar with Sting's "Brand New Day" album and tour may find the Chris Botti magic familiar as he was a featured soloist on Sting's tour, which lasted two and a half years. More artists who have shared the stage with Chris include folk-rock icons Joni Mitchell, Paul Simon and Natalie Merchant, and vocal tracks on his albums feature no less than Michael Bublé, Paula Cole, Jill Scott, Gladys Knight and Renee Olstead, among many others.

The Ayala Malls is the place to be when it comes to entertainment and shopping on an entirely new level. It brings in the biggest names in entertainment for once-in-a-lifetime performances such as this.

ROMANTIC jazz trumpeter Chris Botti

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

The road to San Sebastian

By Marinel R. Cruz

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER MES DE GUZman was given the Premio Altadis-Nuevos Directores (New Director Prize, Special Mention) award, a special citation for his work on the digital movie "Ang Daan Patungong Kalimugtong (The Road to Kalimugtong)" in the recently concluded 54th San Sebastian International Film Festival in Spain.

But De Guzman was unable to attend the ceremony and accept his award due to lack of financial support, the award-winning director told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview on Monday.

"I received information about my nomination in July," the filmmaker said. "Sometime in August, I asked for financial aid from a government agency [that provides grants and other financial assistance to filmmakers], but was told that the request for monetary help should be done six months prior to the festival."

De Guzman said he was only expecting the agency to reimburse the money he would borrow elsewhere as he needed assurance that he could pay the loan.

In September, De Guzman sought the help of another government agency, but was again turned down. "The people I talked with told me it was too late since there were only 10 days left before the festival and the board still had to set up a meeting to discuss my request. Again, I wasn't asking for the money immedi-

THE ROAD/ E5

ANALYN Bangsi-il in a scene from "Kalimugtong"

MATT Damon and Leonardo DiCaprio

Cops, crooks, catastrophic consequences

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

CALCULATED CHARACTER STUDIES AND RAdiant performances make the Martin Scorsese-directed "The Departed" a pulse-pounding look into the high-stakes cat-and-mouse games played by the law and organized crime. There are grittily illustrated parallels of familial allegiances and deception, as seen through the eyes of two outsiders-turned-confidants, young cops secretly assigned to infiltrate each other's camps.

Billy Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio) needs to gain Boston's top crime lord's trust, while Colin Sullivan (Matt Damon) is planted into the police force by someone who doesn't recognize the law at all. That powerful figure is Frank Costello (played intensely by Jack Nicholson), who molded Colin in his own image as an impressionable boy. Costello became a father figure and mentor who introduced the young Colin to his warped sense of reality, and a life of shady dealings.

Billy later enters the picture and pretends to be a bristling thug (a cover reinforced by unsavory family connections), so that he'd be allowed into Costello's gang. Colin, simultaneously, begins a promising career in law enforcement. But both spies eventually discover that it's a no-win situation. Maintaining or ditching their fabricated facades will cost them dearly.

Two worlds

Loosely based on the Hong Kong flick "Infernal Affairs," "The Departed" is re-imagined by screenwriter William Monahan, who solidly presents two worlds that are seemingly impenetrable, but similar enough on some levels. The characters' motives—rooted in personal gain, vindication, or self-preservation—are well-established; it's not too hard to figure out what they're going to do next (although there are shocking surprises).

The visuals are mostly brightly lit, belying the dark and monstrous nature of Costello, who freely and fearlessly roams around his territory.

But the notion that it's difficult for both groups to flush out the double agents is difficult to swallow. Few characters are focused on to become suspected of double-crossing their group to their enemies. It's helpful that suspicion is handled well through Nicholson's imposing and occasionally disturbing character, who warns potential traitors—Billy included—that they tread carefully.

More likeable

On the cops' side, Sergeant Dignam (Mark Wahlberg) is useful, as his foul-mouthed, rumble-ready personality is tempered by his keen senses and loyalty to his old cop colleagues. He's horribly ill-mannered, but proves to be among the more likeable characters in the long run, because he's the most transparent. You can only bear the others' duplicities for so long.

"The Departed" has gruesome, gasp-guaranteed moments that come mostly unannounced, thanks to the script's dark wit, and the film's careful editing. Also, not only do Nicholson, DiCaprio, Damon and Wahlberg perform laudably, so do Martin Sheen, Alec Baldwin and Vera Farmiga.

These complement Scorsese's vision which, once again, creates a beguiling portrait of crime and career opportunities that keeps one reeling and feeling uneasy, long after watching it.

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THE BREED
ZOOM 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:30
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DEAD OR ALIVE 1:25 / 3:30 / 5:35 / 7:40 / 9:45
THE DEPARTED 2:40 / 5:50 / 9:00

MALL 5

1 THE DEPARTED 1:40 / 4:50 / 8:00
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL
2 PULSE 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:40
FIRST DAY HIGH 1:00 / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:20
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Ayala Cinemas

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THE BALLAD OF RICKY BOBBY

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The true story behind the terrifying Legend that shocked America

OPENS OCT. 11

FROM MICHAEL BAY
THE PRODUCER OF
PEARL HARBOR
AND ARMAGEDDON

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
THE BEGINNING

NEW LINE CINEMA

'Worlds Apart' helps bring diverse cultures together

EVERY TUESDAY AT 8 P.M., THE AXN channel screens one of the most unusual reality challenge shows on television. Titled "Worlds Apart," the program features episodes that show American families living with different people and cultures all over the globe.

The experience is a daunting one, because the families have to put up with all sorts of difficulties and deprivations, as well as practices and beliefs that they often have a very hard time accepting.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Last week, for instance, a family lived for nine days in a godforsaken part of Morocco, and had to eat, work and endure the terrible cold at night with nothing but rough blankets to provide scant warmth and comfort.

For the first few days, the American kids did nothing but cry and bewail their fate, while their mother sniffed at the lack of modern kitchen and bathroom facilities, and their father chafed at having to do manual and menial labor.

In time, however, the reality show's thematic point started to kick in: Despite their very strong biases and complaints, the Americans slowly began to realize that their hosts' "impoverished" lives had plus factors that balanced the equation of their experiment in cross-cultural living.

They found that, with no office or school to go to, their days were spent engaging in simpler and yet more elemental tasks.

And, with absolutely no technology to make their lives easier and more comfortable, they had to rely on themselves and their resources—and on each other.

The American kids discovered that they were making fast friends with their local counterparts, despite the huge language problem.

And their mother had more time to think her life through, and ended up deciding to change her lifestyle once she returned to the States.

The biggest beneficiary of the show's cross-cultural experiment was the head of the American family, who suddenly found himself with a lot of free time—which he devoted to finally talking to and playing with his heretofore neglected children, for hours on end.

For the first time in his life, he shared, he felt like a father in the real sense of the word, and vowed to keep his new bond with his children strong even after they had gone back home.

We've watched some earlier episodes of "Worlds Apart" and were put off by the American families' constant and rude complaints about the "inferior" cultures they were being "forced" to inhabit.

Invariably, however, they soon simmered down and learned how to appreciate the deeper aspects of their hosts' ways of life, which sometimes turned out to be more meaningful than theirs.

For these and other insights, catch the next telecast of "Worlds Apart." "Contradicting" its title, the show helps bring diverse cultures together in a unique and insightful way.

Video art project

ONGOING until today at the Cubicle Art Gallery (Stella Maris Street, Maybunga, Pasig) is the "End Frame Video Art Project," presented by Visual Pond, in partnership with the Listening Group of Companies and One Minute Foundation, with support from the Ateneo Art Gallery.

The video art festival creates opportunities for artists to show their works, and further discussions about a medium that is quickly gaining popularity as a contemporary art form.

The Cubicle Art Gallery features video artworks by **Kacey Pamintuan** and **Jevijoe Vitug**, and video installations by **Poklong Anading**, **Game Ross Pastrana**, **Andrei Salud** and **Rembrandt Vocalan**.

Visit http://endframe.visualpond.org.

OPENING TODAY

From page E6

day Night Live" alumnus behind "Anchorman." A dim-witted Southerner (Ferrell) achieves NASCAR stardom, but loses everything after a crash leaves him badly shaken. Chris Vognar of The Dallas Morning News calls it "an unapologetic goof fest, light as aluminum and seemingly edited with Scotch tape." Pete Vonder Haar of Film Threat complains: "[It] isn't very funny, which is a problem for a movie billing itself as a comedy ... it is lazy, which is far-worse." Robert Wilonsky of The Village Voice says: "There's no difference between the movie and the end-credit outtakes ... Ferrell may be no Groucho Marx ... [but] he's the loudest, driest, and most fearless comic actor working."

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WHEN LIVES ARE ON THE LINE, SACRIFICE EVERYTHING.
KEVIN COSTNER ASHTON KUTCHER
THE GUARDIAN
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE FUGITIVE"
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

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Ayala Malls CINEMAS
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4:30PM YOU'RE THE ONE
7:30PM ELSA Y FRED
9:30PM NO SOS VOS, SOY YO
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KENNY DOUGHTY
(star of "The Great Raid")
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my first wedding
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Sm Megamall Mega Mall Annex Building, Mandaluyong City. Telephone: 633 3227 - 6319851 loc. 191

1 (DOLBY)	THE DEPARTED
2 (DOLBY)	TALLADEGA NIGHTS
3 (DOLBY)	GERMAN FILM FEST
4 (DOLBY)	PULSE
PREMIERE	
(DOLBY)	ZOOM / STEP UP

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1	THE DEPARTED
2	FLY BOYS
3	FIRST DAY HIGH
4	DEAD OR ALIVE

stormall
EDSA SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3	FIRST DAY HIGH
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	PLEASE CALL
5	TWILIGHT DANCERS

metropolis star cinema
www.tickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433694

1	PULSE
2	THE DEPARTED
3	FIRST DAY HIGH
4	FLY BOYS

THEATRES
Telephone No (042) 600-2025

1	JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2	FIRST DAY HIGH
3	THE WICKER MAN

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	ZOOM
2 (DOLBY)	DEAD OR ALIVE
3 (DOLBY)	JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 (DOLBY)	THE DEPARTED
5 (DOLBY)	FLY BOYS
6 (DOLBY)	PULSE
7 (DOLBY)	FIRST DAY HIGH
8 (DOLBY)	THE BREED
9 (DOLBY)	YOU ME & DUPREE
10 (DOLBY)	STEP UP

Blue Wave MALL ALABANG
Samukong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY)	THE DEPARTED
2 (DOLBY)	FIRST DAY HIGH
3 (DOLBY)	PUSE
4 (DOLBY)	RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 (DOLBY)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	THE DEPARTED
3	FIRST DAY HIGH
4	TWILIGHT DANCERS
5	RESERVED

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	FIRST DAY HIGH
2	POSSESSED BY EVIL
3	PLEASE CALL
4	RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	FIRST DAY HIGH
2	PUSE
3	FLY BOYS

Center Mall Cinema
Bagulo Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Bagulo City) tel (074)- (4449348)

1	TWILIGHT DANCERS
2	THE DEPARTED

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY)	FIRST DAY HIGH
2	THE DEPARTED
3 (DTS)	TWILIGHT DANCERS
4	STEP UP

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	SNAKE ON A PLANE
2	FIRST DAY HIGH

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6953 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	STEP UP
2 (DOLBY)	THE DEPARTED
3 (DOLBY)	TALLADEGA NIGHT
4 (DOLBY)	FLY BOYS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 (DTS)	FIRST DAY HIGH
3 (DOLBY)	PLEASE CALL
4	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1	BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 (DOLBY)	YOU ME & DUPREE
3 (DTS)	FIRST DAY HIGH
4	PLEASE CALL

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	ZOOM
2	FIRST DAY HIGH
3 (DOLBY)	THE WICKER MAN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	FIRST DAY HIGH
2	CRANK
3 (DOLBY)	ZOOM
4 (DTS)	THE WICKER MAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1	SNAKE ON A PLANE
2	FIRST DAY HIGH
3 (DOLBY)	STORMBREAKER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1	FIRST DAY HIGH
2	THE WICKER MAN

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748

1	PLEASE CALL
2	PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (DOLBY)	PLEASE CALL
2	PLEASE CALL
3	PLEASE CALL
4 (DTS)	PLEASE CALL

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2	PLEASE CALL
3 (DTS)	FIRST DAY HIGH
4	SNAKE ON A PLANE
5	TWILIGHT DANCERS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	ZOOM
2	FIRST DAY HIGH
3	THE WICKER MAN
4	THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	PLEASE CALL
2	DOS EKIS

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Bad news, ladies

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2ND WEEK

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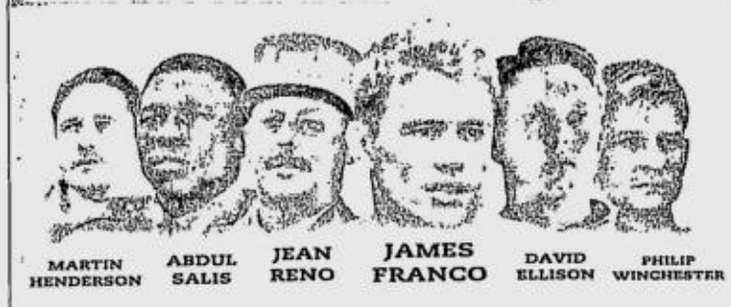

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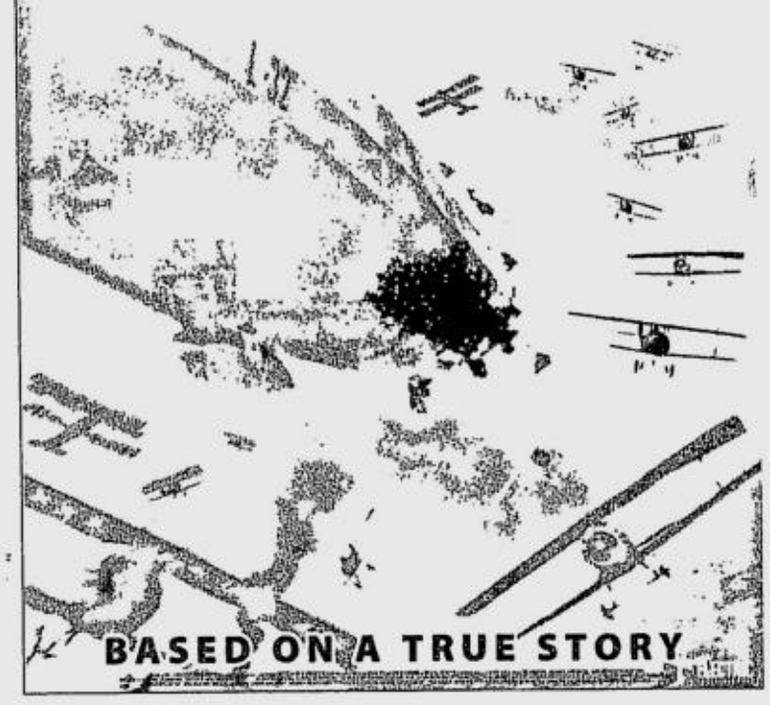

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PULSE	THE DEPARTED R13	FLYBOYS PG13
TALLADEGA NIGHTS: THE BALLAD OF RICKY BOBBY R13	ZOOM G	THE DEPARTED R13

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MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – FREE SEATING – MONDAY-FRIDAY.

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE DEPARTED MTRCB R-13 12.30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:00
2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS MTRCB. R-13 12.00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
3 GERMAN FILM FEST
4 PULSE (Subject for MTRCB Rating)

PREMIERE THEATRE: ZOOM (GP) / STEP UP (PG-13)

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OPENS TODAY

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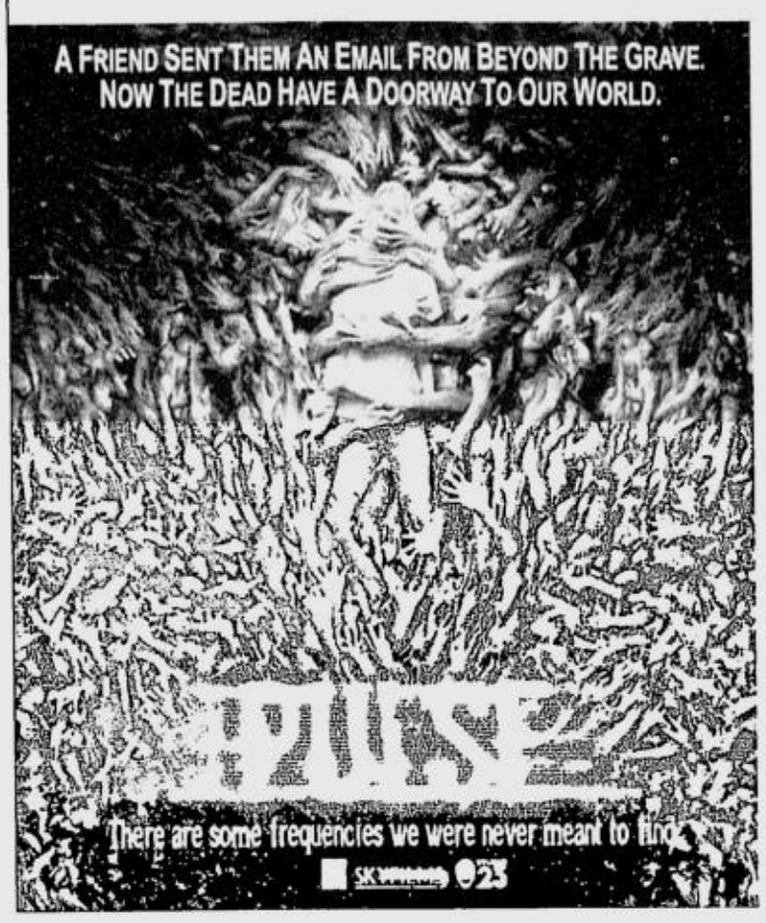

There are some frequencies we were never meant to find.

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CINEMA 1: FLY BOYS PG-13
CINEMA 2: ZOOM GP
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CINEMA 3: PULSE
CINEMA 4: TALLADEGA NIGHTS R-13
CINEMA 5: THE DEPARTED R-13

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MUSIC MUSEUM

OCT. 07, 2006	AKAPELLAS	8:00 PM
OCT. 13 2006	[illegible]	8:00 PM

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EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7.00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY	CERRUDO .. CLASSICO	8:00PM
OCT. 05, 12, 29, 28	ISAY ALVAREZ & ROBERT SENA	8:30 PM
OCT. 7, 14 21, 2006	AYEN LAUREL & RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

THX

G1 (GLORIETTA 1)	1 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	2 THE DEPARTED	3 PULSE	4 FIRST DAY HIGH
G4 (GLORIETTA 4)	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS	5 STEP-UP	6 THE DEPARTED	7 PULSE
GB1 (GREENBELT 1)	1 STEP-UP	2 THE DEPARTED		
GB3 (GREENBELT 3)	1 THX PELICULA: 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 PULSE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FLYBOYS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)	1 THX THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS	2 PULSE		
	3 STEP-UP	4 FLYBOYS	5 FIRST DAY HIGH	
ACC (AYALA CENTER CEBU)	1 THE DEPARTED	2 SCOOP	3 THE BREED	4 FIRST DAY HIGH
M2 (MARKET! MARKET!)	1 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	2 THE DEPARTED		
	3 FIRST DAY HIGH	4 PULSE	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

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MES de Guzman

The road to San Sebastian

From page E1

ately. I was only requesting for a reimbursement.

"It was disappointing. The festival's coordinator had scheduled five screenings for 'Kalimugtong,' a press conference and other promotional events. Our itinerary was already complete and very organized."

De Guzman said he was ready with copies of "Kalimugtong" with Spanish subtitles as well as the film's posters and flyers that the festival organizers requested. However, he was not able to bring them to Spain. "*Iba kapag nandoon ka.* I could've promoted the film and given it better exposure," he pointed out.

Only 18 films were chosen to compete in the New Directors section this year. Lino Brocka's 1982 film "Cain at Abel" was the last Filipino movie that competed in the film fest's main section.

"Kalimugtong" is the story of two Benguet children who "cross mountains" to get to school every day.

Directors' jury

The jury of the New Directors section was composed of actress and jury chair Patricia Reyes Spindola, novelist/scriptwriter and film critic Gilbert Adair, essayist/critic and lecturer on film theories Carlos Losilla, director-actress Susana de Moraes, musician/producer Per Neilsen, vice president of Cinémathèque Francaise Martine Offroy and poet Kirmen Uribe.

"The San Sebastian is not an ordinary film fest," he said. "I just spoke with some Filipinos helping with the festival and they told me it would have won the grand prize had it been promoted well."

The jury bestowed the Altadis Nuevos Directores award on the film "Fairplay" by Lionel Bailliu of France.

De Guzman recently sought the endorsement of the Department of Education on the screening of "Kalimugtong" in various schools all over the country. The school tour would begin in November at the University of Sto. Tomas.

Various film organizations at the University of the Philippines and De La Salle University have also expressed interest, he said.

De Guzman said his new film "Balikbayan Box," which delves on the lives of the children of OFWs, is now in post-production.

His short film "Batang Trapo" won several prizes, including Best Short Film at the Marrakesh International Film Festival, and was screened in Cannes. "Kalimugtong" also won Best Director and Production Design at this year's Urian, given by the Manunuris, composed of respected film critics.

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10 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
11 THE BREED
12 FLY BOYS

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2 THE BREED
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 STEP UP
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10 PULSE
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12 WICKER MAN

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2 THE BREED
3 CRANK
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10 YOU ARE THE ONE
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12 MONSTER HOUSE

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2 YOU ARE THE ONE
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8 STEP UP
9 FLY BOYS
10 ZOOM

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2 PULSE
3 STEP UP
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 THE BREED
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

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2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 THE DEPARTED
6 YOU ARE THE ONE
7 THE BREED
8 FLY BOYS
9 PULSE

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 THE DEPARTED
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 FLY BOYS

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
2 PULSE
3 FLY BOYS
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 THE DEPARTED
7 THE BREED
8 ZOOM
9 STEP UP
10 CRANK
11 WICKER MAN
12 POSSESSED BY EVIL

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1 STEP UP
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 ZOOM

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2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 FLY BOYS

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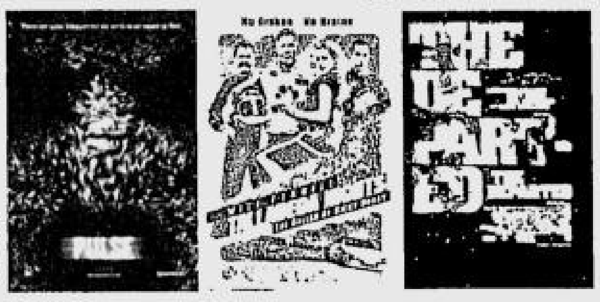

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4 THE DEPARTED

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2 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
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3 THE DEPARTED
4 SCOOP
5 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 WICKER MAN
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 DEAD OR ALIVE

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2 RESERVED
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 SCOOP
7 RESERVED
8 WICKER MAN

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3 FIRST DAY HIGH
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OPENING TODAY

The Departed

STARS LEONARDO DICAPRIO, Matt Damon, Mark Wahlberg, Jack Nicholson, Alec Baldwin, Vera Farmiga

Directed by Martin Scorsese

For the first time in 11 years (since "Casino"), the "greatest living American filmmaker" returns to the mean streets of crime and corruption in this mob drama "inspired" by the 2002 Hong Kong hit "Infernal Affairs." A rookie cop (DiCaprio) infiltrates the inner circle of an Irish gangster (Nicholson)—not knowing that a crooked cop (Damon) is already in way too deep. Todd McCarthy of Variety toasts Scorsese for "cooking up a juicy, bloody steak of a movie... pulsing with energy, tangy dialogue and crackling performances from a fine cast." Peter Travers of Rolling Stone agrees: "A new American crime classic from the legendary [filmmaker] whose talent shines here on its highest beams. [It's] a defiantly uncompromised vision of a society rotting from the inside." Kirk Honeycutt of The Hollywood Reporter describes it as "robust storytelling... a doozy of tight construction and breathtaking suspense... a ferociously entertaining film."

MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
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LEONARDO DiCAPRIO
MATT DAMON
JACK NICHOLSON
AND MARK WAHLBERG
THE DEPARTED
www.thedeparted.com

Pulse

Stars Kristen Bell, Ian Somerhalder, Christina Milian, Jonathan Tucker

Directed by Jim Sonzero

Investigating a string of mysterious suicides, a snoopy coed (Bell) stumbles on an Internet site that promises the ultimate close encounter with ghosts. Based on Kiyoshi Kurosawa's 2001 Japanese thriller "Kairo," this Hollywood version is described by Susan Walker of Toronto Star as "an apocalyptic parable, an arty horror flick ... [with a] grainy, duotone look ... [it] is most cunning in its overarching theme: What Americans have to fear most are hidden dangers in their midst." Stephen Hunter of Washington Post comments: "It is far from great, but it certainly holds your attention. Sonzero and his writers have taken the conceit of the original Japanese film and grafted a Western rationale into it." Sydne Summer of E! Online thinks this "remake achieves its goal of capturing the [original's] lonely message: Our wireless ways seem to connect us, but they also isolate us further."

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MTRCB RATING R-13

Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby

Stars Will Ferrell, John C. Reilly, Sacha Baron Cohen, Gary Cole

Directed by Adam McKay

America's fascination with speed and car racing is spoofed by the same "Satur-

OPENING/ E3

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G-Live is great for news and entertainment buffs who want to keep abreast of the latest current events. Because information is delivered via Globe's cellular network with its undisputed nationwide coverage, you can be sure of getting the news no matter where you are.

In tune with the times

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METRO / A19

30 Metro schools still closed; power restoration, repairs being rushed

BUSINESS / B1

Peso's bullish run not yet over; analysts see P49.25 to $1 in next few weeks

NEWS / A3

Pag-asa to grumbling Metro Manilans: Listen to gov't warnings on typhoons

WORLD / A22

US urges Thai junta to lift martial rule in 10 days

And the most requested funeral song is . . .

LONDON—JAMES BLUNT'S "Goodbye My Lover" is the song most requested at British funerals and remembrance services, closely followed by Robbie Williams' "Angels," according to a survey released on Monday.

AND THE MOST/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, October 5, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 299 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Swiss urge rich countries: Return cash of dictators

LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND—RICH COUNTRIES should speed up procedures to return to third-world countries the money stolen by deposed dictators, Swiss officials said during an international conference on the subject.

Prominent cases in which the Swiss have acted include the 2003 decision to return hundreds of millions of dollars stashed in Swiss banks by late dictator Ferdinand Marcos back to the Philip-

SWISS/ A4

Malacañang now distancing from Ombudsman's decision

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG IS DISTANCING ITSELF FROM the Ombudsman's decision clearing Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and other officials of any criminal liability in the voided P1.3-billion poll automation deal. The decision whipped up a storm of indignation that centered mainly on the decision reversing the Supreme Court ruling in 2004 voiding the deal.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita would not declare open support for the Ombudsman decision for fear of earning the ire of the Supreme Court. "I can't say whether the Ombudsman is right or wrong because its enemy here is the Supreme Court," he said yesterday.

Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez is in Switzerland departing on Saturday after approving the Ombudsman panel's controversial resolution on the Comelec's automation contract with Mega Pacific.

A check with her office showed Gutierrez left for Lausanne to attend the Third Informal Seminar on the Return of Illicit Assets of Politically Exposed Persons slated on Oct. 1 to Oct. 3. (*Story on this page*)

A member of her staff said Gutierrez

MALACAÑANG/ A8

FRIENDS OF ST. FRANCIS Susan Reyes is licked by her dalmatian, one of 300 dogs that packed the Makati City Hall Quadrangle on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi on Tuesday observed as World Pet Day. *(Story on Page A20.)*

REM ZAMORA

GMA flip-flops on exams

RSBS exits Dec. 31; gov't sets new AFP pension fund

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO create a new pension fund scheme for new officers and soldiers entering the service next year because the military's Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) will be deactivated by Dec. 31, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. said yesterday.

Cruz said legislation would be needed to create the new pension fund to be run by "professional managers," unlike the RSBS which was run by retired military officers.

He said the RSBS would be deactivated to prevent further financial bleeding and to ensure that soldiers get their contributions back upon retirement.

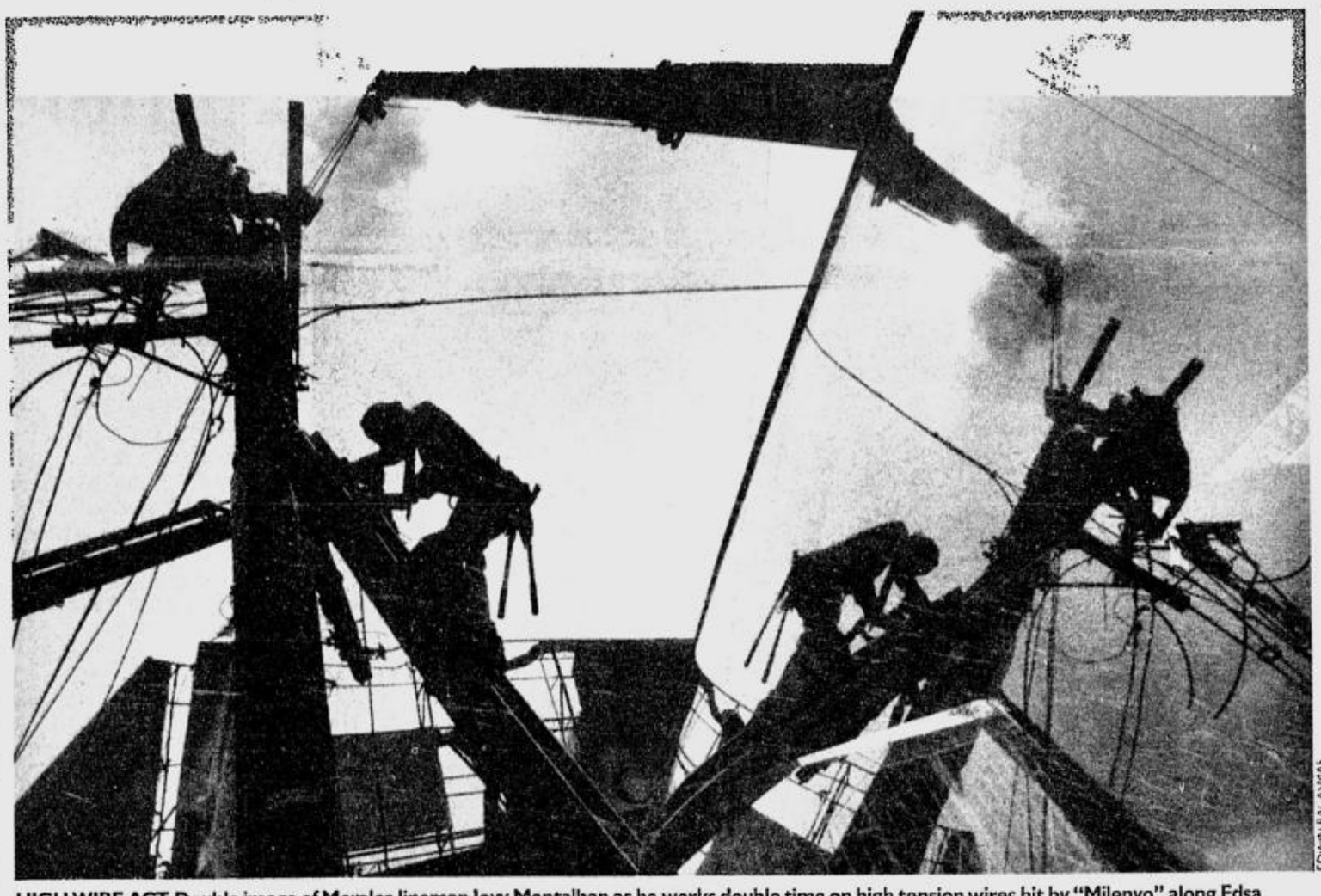
"This is a crucial first step in fixing the retirement benefits system of the AFP," Cruz said at a briefing in Camp Aguinaldo that was aired live on radio for the benefit of soldiers.

Since its creation by then President Ferdinand Marcos in 1973, the RSBS has collected mandatory contributions from soldiers but has failed to pay for the soldiers' pensions.

The pension of military personnel, which amounts to P10.6 billion annually, now comes from the national budget. As of last year, pension arrears stood at P16 billion.

"The RSBS is a hopeless case. It's bankrupt," Cruz said. He said some of RSBS managers would be prosecuted for graft.

RSBS EXITS/ A8



EDWIN BALASTAS

HIGH WIRE ACT. Double image of Meralco lineman Jovy Montalban as he works double time on high tension wires hit by "Milenyo" along Edsa corner Agutaya Street, Makati City. Meralco claims that close to 100 percent of its circuits in Metro Manila have been restored. *(Story on Page A3.)*

Palace waits for results of NBI probe

By Christine O. Avendaño

WAVERING YET AGAIN on the matter of the tainted nursing board examination, Malacañang announced yesterday that it would defer the issuance of an executive order on a retake until it gets all the facts in.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said President Macapagal-Arroyo was "not insensitive" to the hue and cry generated by her decision to order a retake of the June exam marred by a leak of test questions.

Ermita said Malacañang would take into consideration not only the final ruling of the Court of Appeals, which had temporarily stopped the exam passers from being sworn in as nurses, but also a crucial finding of the National Bureau of Investigation, which would determine who among the passers had benefited from the leak.

The NBI report is expected to be submitted to Malacañang on or before Oct. 15, he told reporters at his weekly briefing.

GMA FLIP-FLOPS/ A6

Days of monster billboards numbered

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

ONE WEEK AFTER MONSTER billboards were disrobed so they could defy the fury of Typhoon "Milenyo," their gigantic steel frames remained naked and if their owners were smart, they would start voluntarily dismantling them now.

This was the advice of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago who said yesterday that there was no hope for these signposts under an administrative order that Malacañang had released and the antibillboard blight bill she had authored.

Santiago said President Macapagal-Arroyo was to certify her bill as an urgent administration measure so that it could be enacted into law before the yearend.

The bill prohibits the erection of billboards in any place that obstructs traffic, on rooftops, along thoroughfares, telephone or electric poles, and other public structures or buildings. The signs must conform to certain specifications as to size and strength to withstand strong winds.

The day before Milenyo struck on Sept. 28, owners pulled down on billboards tarpaulin covers and canvasses containing advertising art work, but that did not stop the typhoon from toppling around 40 of them, leaving one dead and several injured, damaging property, causing massive traffic jams and sparking a public outcry that they be torn down.

DAYS OF MONSTER/ A10

RP beauty aboard hijacked Turkish plane

DIVERTED TO ITALY, 107 passengers (one of them, at left, a Filipino beauty candidate Jamie Liz Castillo) and six crew of the hijacked Turkish Airlines disembark at the Brindisi airport. AFP

FOR MORE THAN THREE HOURS, JAMIE LIZ Castillo huddled with three other Asian women on a jetliner that was hijacked by a Turkish man on Tuesday while on a flight from the Albanian capital of Tirana and forced to fly to Italy where he later surrendered and freed all 113 people aboard unharmed.

Castillo, 23, competed as the Philippine representative in the Miss Globe International 2006 beauty pageant in Albania and was en route home when the hijacker, identified by Turkish authorities as Hakan Ekinci, took over the aircraft and demanded to have a message delivered to Pope Benedict XVI.

"I was the only Filipino in the airplane so it was all the more scary," said Castillo, the 2003 Mutya ng Pilipinas who was with fellow contestants from Singapore, Malaysia and India.

"I was confused. I did not know what was happening," she told GMA news last night in an inter-

RP BEAUTY/ A8

Subic rape case sizzles outside court

By Volt Contreras

OFF-COURT HOSTILITIES CONtinue between the Filipino complainant in the Subic rape case and the chief prosecutor even as the landmark trial nears its conclusion.

In separate official statements, the mother and elder brother of "Nicole" yesterday narrated to the Department of Justice how, as early as July, Senior State Prosecutor Emilie Fe de los Santos purportedly pushed for a settlement of the case against four American Marines.

SUBIC RAPE/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2006

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over the Bicol region and the western sections of Visayas and Mindanao. The rest of Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/04/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Rains
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Colleague says slain bishop a marked man

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

TARLAC CITY—ELEVEN MONTHS BEFORE HE WAS STABBED DEAD on Tuesday, Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento said he had confirmed with his contacts in the military that his name had been listed in the military order of battle, according to a fellow Aglipayan church official.

Fr. Eleuterio Revollido, who chairs the Council of Priests of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (the Philippine Independent Church), said that Ramento was able to get the confirmation in November 2005 just as the labor conflict between two unions and the management of Hacienda Luisita, which he helped mediate, was about to be resolved.

One of those who confirmed Ramento's inclusion in the military order of battle was an Army officer who had ties with the IFI and was concerned over the bishop's safety, Revollido said.

Ramento, 69, chair of the Supreme Council of Bishops of the IFI, also known as the Aglipayan Church, was stabbed dead early on Tuesday at his convent in Tarlac.

Revollido said Ramento's death may be the signal of the start of attacks on high-profile human rights defenders. He said the IFI council was "not discounting" the possibility that it was a case of political killing.

"He issued strong statements against President Macapagal-Arroyo and her administration's policies. He was outspoken. He spoke out against the extra-judicial executions and Charter change. He supported the impeachment complaint [against the President]," Revollido said.

Lt. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, chief of the Armed Forces' Northern Luzon Command, protested that allegations of a military link in the killing was a "plain lie."

"The leftists are trying to connect the killing to the military. We're being made a convenient excuse," Ramos said in a mobile phone interview.

He said Ramento was "not on the OB."

The military order of battle is a confidential list of names of suspects targeted for arrest.

Armed Forces chief of staff Hermogenes Esperon denied Ramento was in the military's order of battle, saying no religious leader was on the list.

Those on the list are not necessarily marked for death, according to a high military official who asked not to be named.

Known leftists operating legally and aboveground are not included in the order of battle, the official said.

The Philippine National Police is focusing its investigation into the Ramento slaying as a case of robbery, not a political killing.

In a statement, the PNP's Task Force Usig, formed last May to investigate the killing of militants and journalists, said Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome, the Tarlac provincial police director, had already reported on his investigation and that evidence found at the crime scene pointed to robbery as the likely motive.

Archimedes Ferrer, the bishop's aide, confirmed the two break-ins at the church in an affidavit. He also told investigators that at about 4:30 p.m. on Oct. 2, a man on a motorcycle was seen near the church compound.

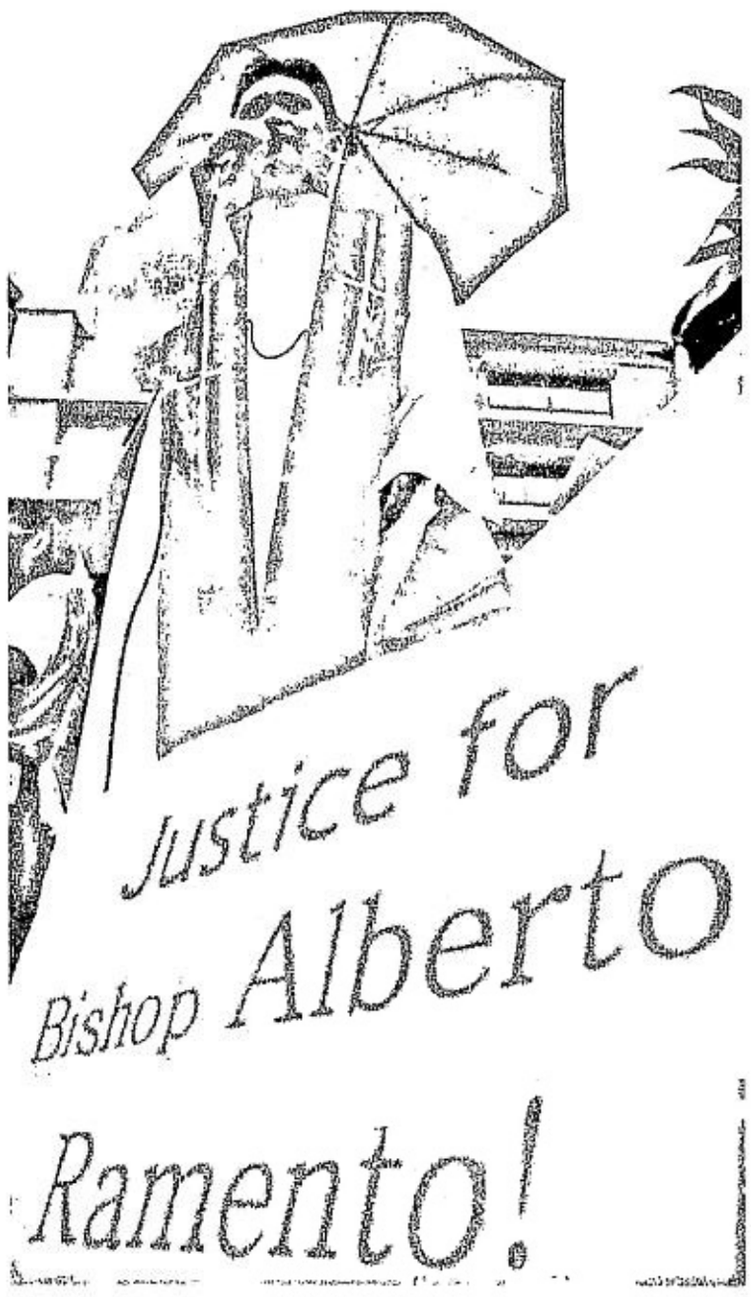
Ramento had talked openly about his being on the OB. "I'm on the OB and if anything bad happens to me, you have an idea of who wanted me killed," Jocelyn Javier, chair of the Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny, recalled the bishop as saying at the launch of "Hustisya," an organization of human rights advocates and relatives of victims, on Sept. 15 at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

The bishop also alerted his family about his being in the OB and about receiving threats because of his activist work.

"He told his wife and children that his life was in danger. He gave them instructions that he wanted to be cremated," Revollido said.

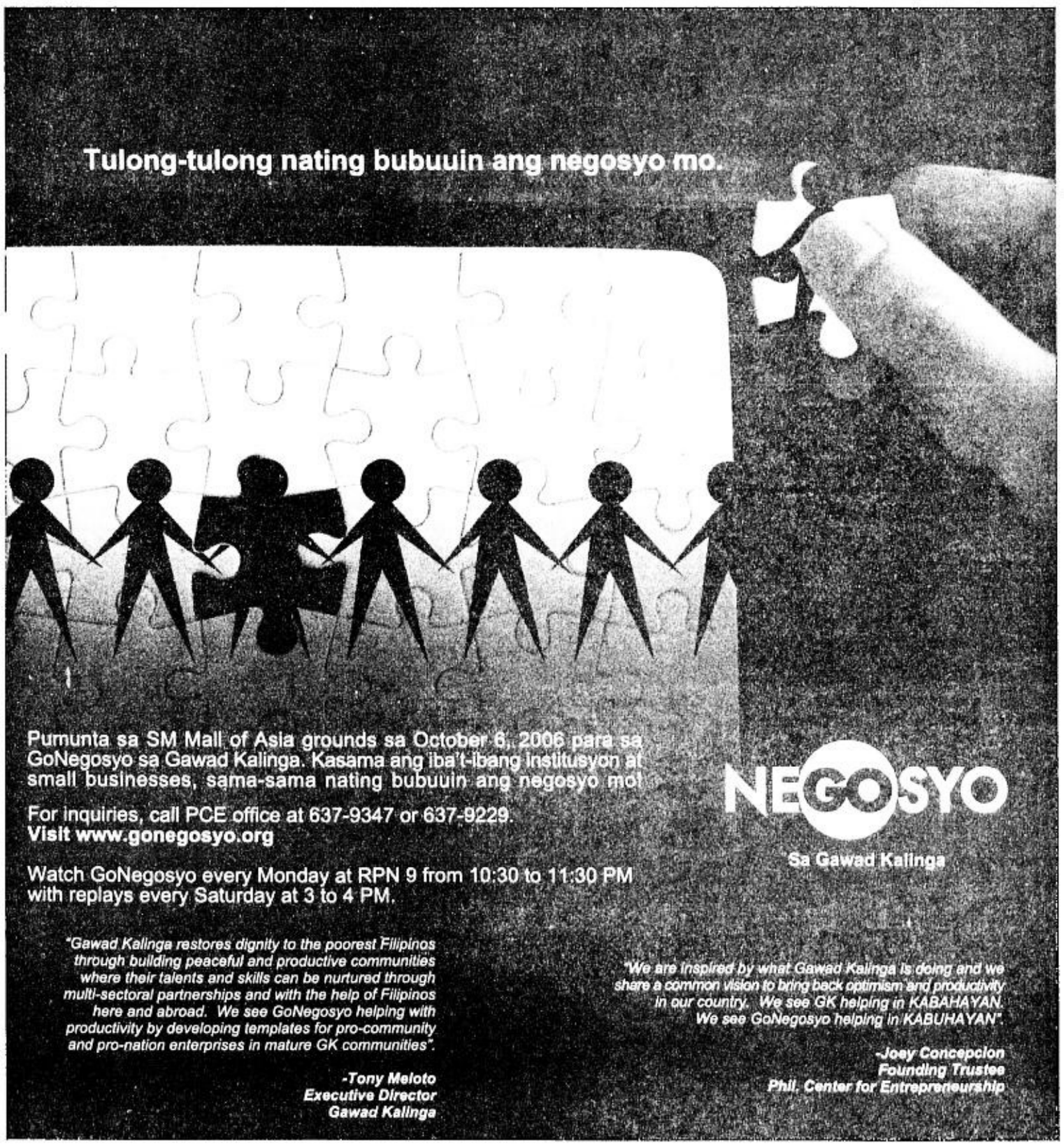
Party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said Ramento's murder "may be an offshoot of his positions on a variety of issues from the Hacienda Luisita strike he supported, his opposition to Charter change, his condemnation of political slays and his role in the peace negotiations [with communist insurgents]."

Ocampo, who with other legislators and militant leaders went to the wake of the murdered bishop in Tarlac, said the initial findings of robbery as the motive may not be true at all. *With reports from Alcuin Papa and Michael Lim Ubac in Manila and Jo Martinez-Clemente, Inquirer Central Luzon*



RALLY FOR JUSTICE. Fr. Benedicto Bacalso, parish priest of Iglesia Filipina Independiente in Davao City, denounces the death of Rev. Alberto Ramento during an interfaith prayer rally at the Freedom Park.

BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO



NEGOSYO
Sa Gawad Kalinga

9:15 a.m.
FORUM 1: Ang Kagalingan ng Pagnenegosyo: (The Value of Entrepreneurship)
Speakers: Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan*, Sec. Arthur Yap* (PMS), Frank Padilla (Gawad Kalinga), Atty. Felipe Gozon (GMA Network, Inc.), Henry Lim Bon Liong (Sterling Paper Group) Chit Juan (Figaro coffee), Luis Oquinena (Gawad Kalinga) and other (PCE) Trustees and Partners
Moderator: Cito Beltran
10: 40 a.m.
Entertainment

10:50 a.m.
FORUM 2: Masaganang Produksyon: Katapat ay Nutrisyon at Pangkabuhayan (GK Communities as Agri-Producers: The Agri-Franchising Model)
Speakers: Toto Barcelona (Harbest), Lyndon Tan* (Basic Necessities – Vegetable producer, exporter), Anthony Inocencio (AP Inocencio Farms – Chicken), Danilo Fausto (DVF Dairy Farms), Catherine Dizon- Posas (Dizon Farms), Arturo Sanvictores (United Rubber Planters and Processors Association),
Gerry Geronimo* (Ating Alamin), Jose S. Concepcion, Jr. (Chair, RFM-Swift), Justin Uy* (ProFoods), Dylan Wilk (Gawad Kalinga)
Moderator: Karen Davila
12:10 a.m.
Entertainment: Leo Martinez

12:35 p.m.
Lunch break

1:30 p.m.
FORUM 3: Talk it Over : Ating Pagusapan, Prosesong Pang-Asenso (Processing: Teaching communities how to earn and 'fish' for life)
Speakers: Lorna Pimentel, BFAR, (Fish Processing), Joy Contreras, BAI (Meat Processing), Susan Gonzalo, BPI (Fruits and Vegetables Processing), Francisco Buencamino,
Moderator: Cheryl Cosim* & Gerry Geronimo*
2:50 p.m.
Entertainment: Ony Carcamo: Ventriloquist

3:00 p.m.
FORUM 4: Iba't Ibang Negosyong Babagay Sa 'Yo: (Various Business Models: Internet, Franchising, Micro Enterprises and Micro Financing)
Speakers: Butch Jimenez (PLDT), Richie Cuna (President, AFFI), Doyee Tumpalan (First VitaPlus), Manny Guina (Rural Bankers Association of the Phil.), Les Reyes (Reyes HairCutters), Sandy Javier (Andoks), Lloyd Luna
Moderators: Cheryl Cosim*
4:20 p.m.
Entertainment

4:30 p.m.
FORUM 5: Sikat na, Negosyante pal Grabe ang Kital : (Celebrity Entrepreneurs)
Speakers: Arnel Ignacio, Gelli de Belen*, Richard Merk, Regine Tolentino, Albert Martinez*, Jolina Magdangal*
Moderators: Korina Sanchez

6:10 p.m.
Closing: Game Show (Ariel Ignacio)
Edru Abraham – Kontra Gapi

* *For confirmation*

Father's grief draws offers of help, comfort

CALAMBA CITY—A WEEK AFTER an avalanche brought on by Typhoon "Milenyo" took the lives of his wife and two children, Gerardo Laganzon of Barangay Bagong Silang, Los Baños, Laguna, is getting a start in rebuilding his shattered life.

Ricky Gonzales, 64, a retired business consultant from Makati City, after reading of Laganzon's story in the INQUIRER, called to offer his help.

Gonzales said he was deeply moved by the tragedy that befell Laganzon and his family.

He said he wanted to meet the grieving father and planned to personally visit Bagong Silang soon.

"After reading the story, I asked myself why I have so much when [Laganzon] has nothing. I know God has reasons for everything so I just felt I have to reach out and help him in whatever way I can," Gonzales told the INQUIRER.

He said more than the material things, he felt Laganzon needed to be helped through the emotional burden of his loss.

Laganzon, who turned 33 five days after the tragedy, painstakingly saved part of his meager earnings as a farmer so he could take his family to the Jollibee restaurant on his birthday.

He said it was his seven-year-old daughter, Camille, who wanted to celebrate his birthday at Jollibee. Camille, son John Lloyd, 2, and wife Marcelina were buried under tons of boulders loosened by rampaging floodwaters.

The three were buried last Sunday, along with other victims of the landslide in Bagong Silang.

Four others still missing

Members of the 406th Laguna Provincial Police Mobile Group (PPMG) were still searching for four other missing villagers.

Village chief Marcelino Navarez asked those wishing to help Lagazon "to lend a hand to all residents of Bagong Silang."

"Until now, we can't go back to farm work because we still have to clear the community of fallen trees, mountain rocks and other debris," Navarez said.

Another businessman who runs a grocery in Batangas City asked the INQUIRER how he and his family can deliver relief items to the affected families in Los Baños.

The businessman, who asked not to be identified, agreed with Gonzales that more than money and material assistance, the residents of Bagong Silang needed comfort and emotional support.

"No amount of money or help can ever bring back the happiness that his family gave him," he said.

The Jollibee Foods Corp. also contacted the INQUIRER and asked how it can help Laganzon and the others.

Supt. Steve Ludan, chief of the 406th Laguna PPMG, said he was also contacted by friends of Senior Supt. Luisito de Leon, the Laguna police director, offering to help in relief operations.

"They were all concerned and expressed their willingness to help the people in Bagong Silang," Ludan said.

Ludan said that aside from food items, the residents of the upland village need clothes and building materials to reconstruct their damaged houses.

But more than the short-term assistance, residents need help in looking for an alternative means of livelihood, he said.

He said the Milenyo had ravaged the community, destroying the small farmlands and killing the livestock like carabao, cows, horses and pigs.

'Virtual river'

Ludan said the village was turned into "a virtual river."

In Igbaras, Iloilo, hopes of finding more survivors in the river tragedy have faded as rescuers have began to focus on retrieving the remains of the missing.

Rescuers have pulled out 22 survivors after an overloaded jeepney was swept by strong currents into the Tangyan River while crossing a concrete bridge in Sitio Songsongon in Barangay Barasan.

The town council has declared a state of calamity because of the large number of casualties and damage to infrastructure and agriculture brought by typhoons Milenyo and Neneng.

Igbaras Mayor Jaime Esmeralda said the resolution would facilitate the release of funds to assist the families of the fatalities and victims of the devastation.

Esmeralda who was among those that conducted an aerial survey of Igbaras and the neighboring towns of Tigbauan and Guimbal said they saw no signs of survivors or remains of the missing passengers.

"We have considered them dead already," he said. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon and Nestor P. Burgos, Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

Weathermen to grumbling folk: Heed our warnings

By Blanche S. Rivera

WITH METRO MANILANS GRUMbling about the lack of warning sent out before the arrival of the ferocious Typhoon "Milenyo," the country's weather bureau has some advice for its residents.

"Listen to the government when it says it will be dangerous to go out. And prepare like the Ivatans of Batanes," the chief weatherman of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa) said.

Nathaniel Cruz said he continues to see people, including media persons, taking risks in areas that were unsafe for commuters and motorists. He also still hears complaints from residents who claim they were not informed of Milenyo's arrival.

"What does this mean? They do not pay attention to the Office of Civil Defense. When we say travel or any activity is dangerous, we mean it is very dangerous," Cruz, chief of Pagasa's weather branch, said in a phone interview yesterday.

He said that while Milenyo was the strongest typhoon to directly hit Metro Manila since 1995, it was not the strongest typhoon to affect the Philippines.

"Definitely, Milenyo is not the only strong typhoon that will hit Metro Manila. We should be prepared for another Milenyo," Cruz said.

Batanes lives with storm signal no. 3 most days during the wet season, but "you don't hear them complaining," Cruz said. The Ivatans' lifestyle—from their houses to their furniture—has been exposed to extreme weather disturbances.

"I'm not saying we should adopt 100 percent what the Ivatans do but considering that we have 20 tropical cyclones a year, maybe it's high time we should be ready for whatever extreme event would be brought by climate change," Cruz said.

The death toll from Typhoon Milenyo has breached 200, and damages were estimated to be at least P2 billion.

Tropical storm "Neneng" (international name Bebenca), which came in the wake of Milenyo's destruction, has accelerated and moved further north to Batanes on its way out of the country, Pagasa said.

Moving north at 19 kph, Neneng remained over the Philippine Sea, sparing parts of Luzon, particularly Bicol region, that were still reeling from the devastating effects of Milenyo.

Packing maximum winds of 85 kph near the center and gustiness of 100 kph, Neneng was located 810 km east of Aparri, Cagayan. It will be 730 km east southeast of Okinawa, Japan by tomorrow.

Pagasa, however, continued to alert residents of Bicol and the western sections of Visayas and Mindanao against flash floods and landslides due to the enhanced southwest monsoon.

Power almost 100% back –Meralco

By Abigail L. Ho

ALTHOUGH CLOSE to 100 percent of Manila Electric Co.'s circuits in Metro Manila have already been restored, a smaller percentage of the capital city's population have gotten power back in their homes.

As of 1 p.m. yesterday, as much as 99.8 percent of its Metro Manila circuits were back on line, Meralco said.

Areas that remained without power included Alabang Hills, Hillsborough Village and Pacific Malayan Village in Muntinlupa.

Some residents of Merville in Parañaque and parts of Quezon City still had no electricity in their houses.

"Meralco keeps on issuing press releases (that it has restored power to almost all areas), but I've barely gotten any sleep due to the heat. It's been a week and we still have no power. That's what's difficult with monopolies," a resident of Merville subdivision in Parañaque complained.

Meralco said severe damages and numerous downed poles prevented its personnel from accelerating restoration in some areas in southern Metro Manila.

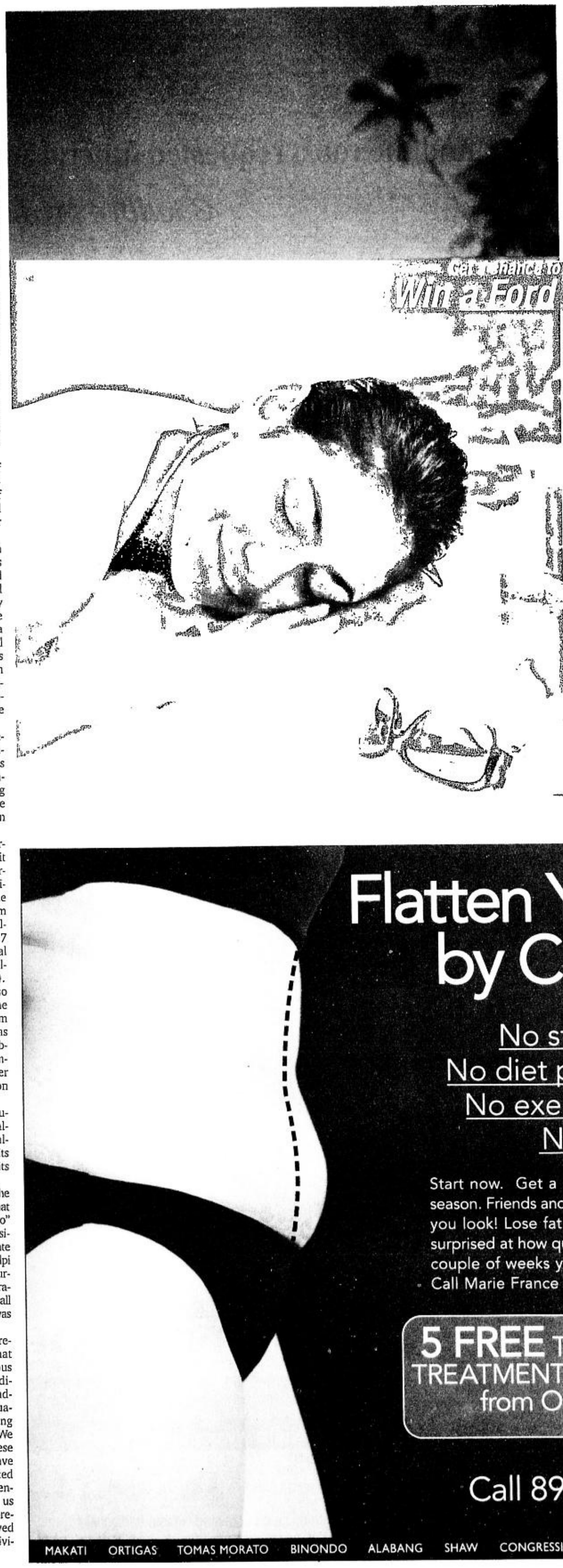
As of 1 p.m. yesterday, Meralco said it had already energized all of its distribution circuits in the northern area (from Malabon to Balintawak) and 99.7 percent in the central area (from Balintawak to Alabang).

It said it had also almost cleared the southern area (from Alabang to Batangas and Quezon) of obstructive debris, enabling it to better pursue restoration works there.

In all, the distribution utility had already restored almost 96 percent of its distribution circuits franchise-wide.

Apart from all the obstructive debris that Typhoon "Milenyo" left, Meralco vice president for corporate communication Elpi Cuna said another hurdle to the fast restoration of electricity to all Meralco customers was wire pilferage.

"We have been receiving reports that some unscrupulous residents and syndicates are taking advantage of the situation and are stealing our electric lines. We are warning these people that we have already coordinated with local law enforcers to help us monitor and apprehend those involved in such illegal activity," he said.



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MARCOS FILE PHOTO

Swiss urge rich countries: Return cash of dictators

From page A1

pine government. The Swiss funds were the largest amount recovered from the billions of dollars that Marcos and his wife allegedly acquired in power.

Switzerland, which hosted the gathering on Tuesday, said the return of stolen assets was an important issue in the fight against international financial crime.

While previous meetings have been held over how to make repayments "brisk, efficient, amicable and transparent," this week's meeting was the first to include poor countries that have been the victims of disappearing government funds, the Swiss foreign ministry said in a statement.

The conference was attended by experts from 20 nations and officials of the World Bank and the United Nations. (Ombudsman Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez attended the conference.)

"The principle is that illegal money from corrupt rulers, so-called potentates and kleptocrats, needs to be restored to the affected country within the scope of legal possibilities," the ministry said.

It urged financial institutions and countries to work together on the "fight against kleptocrats."

Switzerland has traditionally been a favorite location for potentate money because of its banking secrecy rules. But reforms over the last two decades have made it harder to hide money in Switzerland, and the country has become a world leader in returning cash.

Of about US$730 million in Swiss accounts linked to the late Nigerian dictator Sani Abacha, virtually all has been returned to the African country.

In 2002, the government returned to Peru about US$77.5 million linked to former Peruvian spy chief Vladimiro Montesinos, saying the money came from corrupt arms deals.

Smaller amounts of money linked to former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier and Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko remain blocked by Swiss authorities pending resolution of legal disputes.

In other cases, more than US$130 million in alleged bribe money paid by US oil companies to Kazakh officials remains frozen, as does a similar amount tied to Raul Salinas, brother of former Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari. *AP*

And the most requested funeral song is . . .

From page A1

Research for the Bereavement Register found just over a half (51 percent) of people asked for a specific song to be played at their funeral and 79 percent had talked with family and friends about possible song choices.

The survey of 5,000 people also uncovered some unusual final choices for the final goodbye with rock songs, like "I'll Sleep When I am Dead" by Bon Jovi, competing with classical tracks and soul.

"The top 20 really shows how far we have come in terms of saying goodbye. Gone are the days of dirges of yore . . . Instead, we are seeing contemporary music that is easier to relate to," said Mark Roy, founder of the Bereavement Register, which removes the names and addresses of people who have died from databases to reduce junk mail.

Emotive reminder

"Everyone has a favorite song that means something very special to them, often connected to a particular time and place. When the song is played, this can be a very emotive reminder of that person," Roy said in a statement.

Although fashions change, there have been some consistent favorites over recent years, like "Wind Beneath My Wings" at No. 4 and "Candle In The Wind"—a reworked version of which played at Princess Diana's funeral in 1997—at No. 6.

Many of the songs represented the different ages of the deceased.

Songs, like "Danny Boy" (No. 11 in the list), tended to be played at the funerals of the elderly, while S Club 7's "Reach For The Stars" (No. 20) was more usual at children's funerals, according to the survey.

Top 10

Others in the top 20 included "Knocking On Heaven's Door" by Bob Dylan and, perhaps unexpectedly, Fame's "I Want To Live Forever."

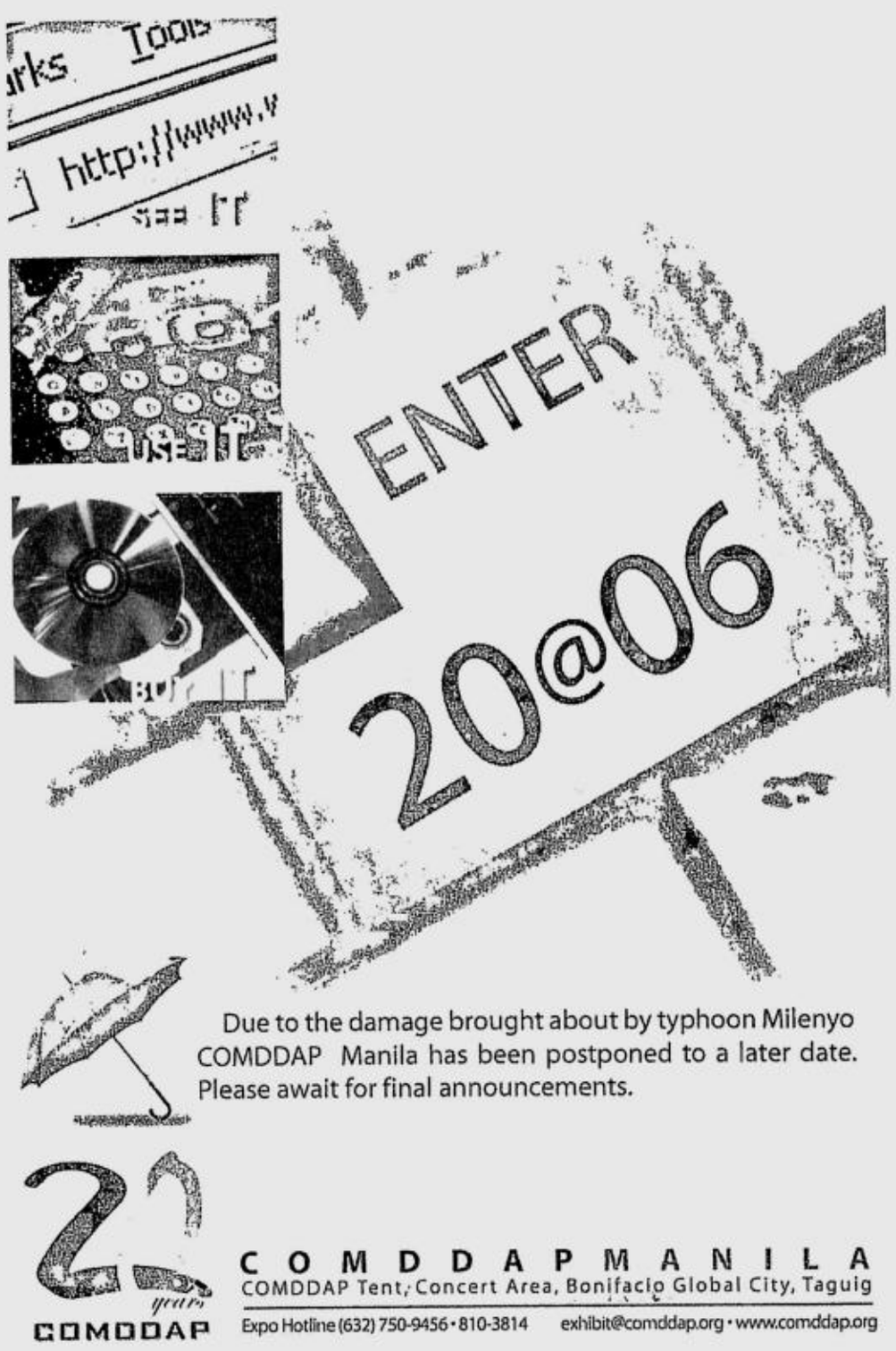
The top 10 requested songs were: 1. "Goodbye My Lover"—James Blunt; 2. "Angels"—Robbie Williams; 3. "I've Had The Time Of My Life"—Jennifer Warnes and Bill Medley.

4. "Wind Beneath My Wings"—Bette Midler; 5. "Pie Jesu"—Requiem; 6. "Candle In The Wind"—Elton John; 7. "With Or Without You"—U2.

8. "Tears From Heaven"—Eric Clapton; 9. "Every Breath You Take—The Police; 10. "Unchained Melody"—Righteous Brothers. *Reuters*

Goodbye My Lover

Did I disappoint you or let you down?
Should I be feeling guilty or let the judges frown?
'Cause I saw the end before we'd begun,
Yes I saw you were blinded and I knew I had won.
So I took what's mine by eternal right.
Took your soul out into the night.
It may be over but it won't stop there,
I am here for you if you'd only care.
You touched my heart you touched my soul.
You changed my life and all my goals.
And love is blind and that I knew when,
My heart was blinded by you.
I've kissed your lips and held your head.
Shared your dreams and shared your bed.
I know you well, I know your smell.
I've been addicted to you.
Goodbye my lover.
Goodbye my friend.
You have been the one.
You have been the one for me.
I am a dreamer but when I wake,
You can't break my spirit - it's my dreams you take.
And as you move on, remember me,
Remember us and all we used to be
I've seen you cry, I've seen you smile.
I've watched you sleeping for a while.
I'd be the father of your child.
I'd spend a lifetime with you.
I know your fears and you know mine.
We've had our doubts but now we're fine,
And I love you, I swear that's true.
I cannot live without you.
Goodbye my lover.
Goodbye my friend.
You have been the one.
You have been the one for me.
And I still hold your hand in mine.
In mine when I'm asleep.
And I will bear my soul in time,
When I'm kneeling at your feet.
Goodbye my lover.
Goodbye my friend.
You have been the one.
You have been the one for me.
I'm so hollow, baby, I'm so hollow.
I'm so, I'm so, I'm so hollow.



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He has over 10 years experience in accounting, audit, and business advisory practice both in private and public companies locally and overseas. His postings included assignments in the Pricewaterhouse Coopers London and US offices. He is a very articulate and dynamic resource speaker and has lectured in various seminars sponsored by SEC, PICPA, TMAP, PCCI and other firms.

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Corrections

IN EARLY copies of the Oct. 4 issue, a front-page caption misstated the name of the Chief Justice. The name of the Chief Justice is Artemio—not Arturo—Panganiban.

* * *

IN THE SAME issue, a front-page story— "Mother of all billboards is GMA's test case" —misspelled the surname of the government corporate counsel. The correct spelling of the counsel's name is Agnes Devanadera—not Devanedera.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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BREASTFEEDING OR BUST

US traders told to keep off RP milk policy

By Philip C. Tubeza

A PARTY-LIST LAWMAKER YESTERDAY chided the influential US Chamber of Commerce for opposing moves to promote breastfeeding by regulating the promotion and advertisements of breast milk substitutes in the country.

Akbayan party-list Rep. Risa Hontiveros scored the US trade group for its "unwanted, unwarranted, and alarming" interference in the multisectoral effort to promote breastfeeding among Filipino mothers.

"The promotion of breastmilk substitutes has undermined breastfeeding as the healthiest and the safest feeding practice for infants and children up to two years old," Hontiveros said in a privilege speech.

She said Thomas Donahue, head of the US Chamber of Commerce, wrote President Macapagal-Arroyo on Aug. 11 and warned her that the proposed ban on advertising and marketing of breast milk substitutes threatened the "country's reputation as a stable and viable destination for investments." The US Chamber of Commerce, which is based in Washington DC, counts Ancham Philippines among its affiliates.

Due to the low rate of breastfeeding in the country, health workers, the Department of Health, and the World Health Organization had been pressing for a revision of the Milk Code to regulate the promotion and advertising of breast milk substitute, she said.

However, Donahue alleged that the DOH's decision to revise the Milk Code's implementing rules and regulations came "without due process or appropriate consultation," she added.

"Mr. Donahue's letter is not only inaccurate—after all, the DOH wants to proscribe the advertising, promotion, sponsorship, and marketing of breast milk substitutes for infants and children up to 2-years-old, and not 3-years-old as he alleges—it is also reflective of the consumerist and profit-oriented mindset of the infant formula industry," Hontiveros said.

"In 2004 alone, the country imported P3 billion worth of infant formula products," she added. She said that came at the expense of public health.

Hontiveros blamed "big foreign pharmaceutical and infant formula companies" for the marginalization of breastmilk, which is deemed by the WHO as the only food for infants and children that can offer numerous unique health advantages.

"Infant formula companies organize so-called mothering classes that ironically extol the alleged advantages of branded formulas. They offer monetary incentives and organize travel tours for health workers to promote their products," Hontiveros said.

She said the WHO discovered that some health center staff members were given P500 per 10 children who were converted to use a particular brand of breastmilk substitutes.

"Barangay health workers, pediatricians, health care professionals get T-shirts, jackets, and other paraphernalia that promote branded breastmilk substitutes," Hontiveros said.

"Promotional items are also ubiquitous in private and public health care facilities. Media advertisements also peddle unsubstantiated and unscientific claims that infant formulas increase the emotional and intelligence quotients of children," she added.

Utilities to be restored thro[illegible] Metro

Utilities [illegible] water, c[illegible] will b[illegible] million[illegible] arou[illegible] p[illegible] h[illegible] a[illegible] w[illegible] c o m[illegible] networ[illegible]

Electric[illegible]

Me[illegible] as t[illegible] lines[illegible] clock, Fil[illegible] lights on w[illegible]

Bicol, one of th[illegible] where around [illegible] estimated regio[illegible] million were s[illegible] can now expect [illegible] back on by 4 pm. [illegible] Capili, Office of Civil Defense [illegible] regional director.

Restoration faster

Meralco will be coordinating closely with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority to ensure smooth traffic flow in areas where fallen trees, electric posts, and billboards pose as hazards.

Meralco also ensures that all Metro Manila railway systems -- Light Rail [illegible]

Out of Meralco's more than 600,000 poles in its franchise area, Francisco said it had confirmed damage to only 570 -- 444 felled or broken, 58 leaning and 68 cracked or slightly damaged. The number of damaged poles is likely to go up in the coming days, including the cost required to repair or replace them. Total damage to power lines so far could be placed at more than P500 million.

[illegible] President wants the daily business of our people back to normalcy soonest," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Communications

Meralco has restored power in all 124 of its circuits in the northern area (from Malabon to Balintawak in Quezon City), 319 of the 386 circuits in the central area (from Balintawak to Alabang), and 100 of the 150 circuits in the southern area (from Alabang to Batangas and Quezon).

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Insurance chief, 3 others face charges

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER EVANGEline C. Escobillo and three other officers of the Insurance Commission (IC) are facing charges over the lifting of the conservatorship of a financially-distressed insurance company.

In a complaint filed with the Office of the Ombudsman, Reymar R. Mansilungan accused Escobillo, financial analysts division chief Ma. Elenore Sanchez, and chief insurance specialists Julia C. Duenas and Evelyn N. Singun of illegally lifting the conservatorship of Acropolis Central Guaranty Corp.

No comment

Mansilungan, who was appointed by the IC as conservator of Acropolis on Dec. 29, 2005, said the insurance firm was ordered to infuse capital to cover pending claims and salaries of its employees.

Reached by the INQUIRER, Escobillo refused to comment on the case.

Acropolis' license was suspended due to its failure to infuse capital to cover its financial deficiencies in 2003 and 2004.

Acropolis had claimed it deposited P21.497 million with the Malayan Bank head office sometime in 2005. But on Feb. 27 this year, Chief Insurance Specialist Singun informed Escobillo in a letter that the account where the P21.497 million was supposedly deposited contained only P12,259.02 as of Dec. 31, 2005, debunking Acropolis' allegation that it had deposited the prescribed amount, Mansilungan said.

Despite the absence of a clear and formal verification of Acropolis' supposed deposit, with 98 percent of pending claims remaining unpaid, and over the vehement objections of the conservator whom she herself had designated, Escobillo still lifted Acropolis suspension in May and even renewed the insurance firm's license in July.

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GMA flip-flops on nursing board exams

From page A1

Ermita said the President had instructed Labor Secretary Arturo Brion to "review and restudy" the draft EO recommending a retake of the board exam "for all."

Brion submitted the draft to Ms Arroyo on Tuesday. The EO was to have been issued by Malacañang yesterday.

Varying reactions

Ermita said the EO had been sent back to Brion with the instruction that he "consider the information he had gathered from his meetings with the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC), the Board of Nursing (BON) and stakeholders of the nursing profession."

According to Ermita, the President also thought of returning Brion's draft EO after learning of the varying reactions of the public, as reported in the media.

"To say it in a few words, the President is not insensitive to what [she had] heard and read when the issue [arose]. And therefore, she directed the [labor department] to review the EO [that Brion] himself submitted in light of all the feedback we got," Ermita said.

He said all these inputs, including the Court of Appeals ruling and the NBI finding, would be incorporated in a fresh draft that Brion would present at "a special Cabinet meeting" on Tuesday.

He also said Ms Arroyo and the Cabinet would then decide on the matter "with finality."

Ermita said he had separately asked Brion and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez whether executive action on the matter would be lawful in the light of a petition pending at the appellate court.

Legal opinions

He said the two officials had replied in the negative. He also said he did not know for sure whether Palace action would render the CA ruling moot and academic.

Ermita said he had also spoken with NBI Director Nestor Mantaring, who told him that the bureau would submit on or before Oct. 15 its final finding on the review centers that had benefited from the leaked test questions.

He said he had asked Mantaring to attend the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday to provide an update on the NBI probe.

So far, Ermita said, the NBI had found that there were two review centers that discussed the leaked test questions with nursing examinees.

The NBI is also looking into another three review centers, he said, adding that all five review centers were located in Luzon but had branches in other areas.

General retake?

The NBI is "reconstructing" the list of reviewers at these five review centers and matching it with the PRC list of exam passers, according to Ermita.

He said that by doing so, the NBI would be able to track down the passers from these review centers and "exclude" those who did not register at the centers.

"What are we leading to here?" Ermita said. "Probably that it could lead to a certain course of action as to whether it will be a general retake for everybody or a retake for certain people."

In case a general retake of the exam would be decided, he said this would be conducted at the same time as the regular nursing board exam—in this case, the first week of December.

Ermita said the government, through the Department of Budget and Management, would allocate P52 million to subsidize the retake, should this be the final position.

Of the 42,000 who took the controversial June exam, only 7,300 passed.

Ermita said "whatever decision that will come out will be good for the nursing profession and the other professions."

Integrity

"We are doing a thorough study because it's important for us to maintain the integrity of our Filipino professionals," he said.

Ermita said that the Palace did not want the reputation of Filipino professionals to be tainted, and that this was the "higher interest" it was taking to heart in dealing with the controversy.

Subic rape case sizzles outside court; Nicole raps prosecutor

From page A1

They were assisted by Nicole's private counsel, Evalyn Ursua.

The mother claimed in an affidavit written in Filipino that De los Santos had once conceded, "We cannot do anything if they call up the judge," to secure the acquittal of the accused.

Who exactly would make that "call" to Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court was not clear, but the mother maintained that De los Santos brought it up at a meeting late in the afternoon of July 17 at the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf coffee shop in Greenbelt, Makati.

De los Santos had earlier denied having proposed a settlement of the rape case that is being viewed as a test of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Reached on the phone yesterday, the prosecutor shrugged off the latest broadside from Nicole's mother and brother.

"It doesn't bother me that much. They can easily weave together any story, but they still need to substantiate it," she said, adding:

"What are they up to now? Do they want to antagonize the judge? Will they now call for his inhibition from the case?"

The public prosecution team had earlier been scheduled to conduct a rebuttal today. But De los Santos said yesterday that the team had decided to cancel that plan.

Bolante case

The mother said it was De los Santos who had called for the July 17 meeting where the latter purportedly warned: "You better enter into a settlement or your daughter's case might be traded off with the Bolante case (*Magpaareglo na kayo kasi baka yung kaso ng anak mo ipagpalit sa kaso ni* Bolante)."

It was a reference to former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante, the purported architect of the P728-million fertilizer fund scam, who is detained in the United States and seeking asylum there.

The funds were purportedly used to help secure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in the 2004 election.

Said Nicole's mother of De los Santos: "I asked her how that could happen. She said: 'We cannot do anything, anyway, if they will call up the judge to tell him to lose the case *(Wala naman tayong magagawa kung tawagan nila si judge at sabihin nila na ipatalo yung kaso)*.'"

In his own affidavit, Nicole's brother claimed to have been present at the meeting and attested to that exchange.

The brother said De los Santos was escorted by her husband to the coffee shop, but that he sat at a separate table.

'Too ashamed'

The mother said De los Santos "tried to persuade us."

"She noted that [Nicole], when she testified on July 6, 10 and 13, was already too ashamed to return home to Zamboanga City, and so she and her siblings might as well leave the country for the United States," the mother said.

The mother quoted De los Santos as saying that Nicole could have "permanent status" in the United States, and that she (the mother) and Nicole's half-sister, who had testified at the trial, could be granted multiple-entry visas.

"The families of the accused have already agreed to settle," De los Santos purportedly said.

The mother said this was her reply: "But we are not interested, ma'am. In the first place, I don't have the final say on this; it's my daughter who will decide."

According to the mother, it was on July 14, or three days before the coffee shop meeting, that De los Santos floated the idea of a settlement for the first time.

She said the day's hearing had just adjourned and they were still in the courtroom.

Said the mother: "I asked her how the case would proceed and what we are really planning to do. I remember talking to her in Bisaya (because we're both Bisaya), '*Unsa atong himuon?*'

"She said that if she were in our position, she would already agree to a settlement."

The mother said she felt disappointed after hearing this from the prosecutor.

Nicole's mother and brother filed the affidavits with the DOJ, with copies sent to Judge Pozon at Makati RTC Branch 139.

Attached to the affidavits was Nicole's letter to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez "reiterating" her request that the panel of public prosecutors led by De los Santos be replaced.

But Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, 21, the US Marine whom Nicole accused of raping her, said on Wednesday he would not agree to any settlement of the case because he wants to prove his innocence and clear his name.

"Even if there was an attempt to settle, I wouldn't want to because this is my life here and I'm being accused of what I feel is the worst thing anybody can be accused of," he said, reacting to allegations by the complainant's mother that prosecutors tried to talk her into agreeing to a settlement. "I would like my name to be cleared." Smith told GMA News.

The trial was to have resumed today with the retained prosecution panel applying finishing touches.

'No more rebuttal'

But in an interview at around 5 p.m. yesterday, De los Santos said her team had decided that there would be "no more rebuttal."

The team had been expected to call back to the stand agents Guy Papageorge and Tony Ramos of the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

The NCIS agents were expected to defend the accuracy of their fact-finding reports on the case, particularly their interview with Smith.

During his testimony, Smith claimed to have been "misquoted" many times in the NCIS report, which now forms part of the prosecution evidence.

But De los Santos said yesterday: "After going over the records of the case, we are confident that we have shown the court that there was no reason for the NCIS agents to distort their report since their functions were purely fact-finding, with no recommendatory powers." *With an AP report*

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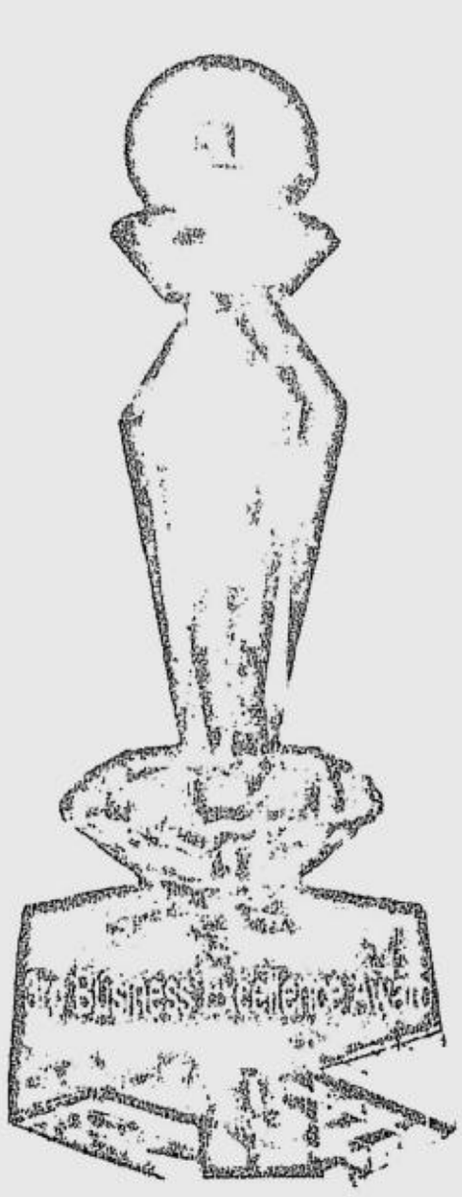


Mystery ailment puts Miriam out of the running for UN deputy post

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

BECAUSE OF HER mysterious ailment, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago is giving up the chance to become a deputy secretary general of the United Nations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has nominated Santiago for the post of rector of the Tokyo-based United Nations University, a position with the rank of deputy UN secretary-general.

Santiago said she was very interested in the position and was short-listed for it, having passed the first hurdle. She is supposed to go for an interview in Geneva, Switzerland at the end of the month but will not be able to make it because of her medical condition.

"I specialize in international law, and would have wanted to return to the UN, where I served when I was younger. But it seems like I will be too weak to travel and to submit to an extensive interview by the end of the month. I am very distressed that I might have to give this rare job opportunity a miss," the senator said.

Santiago said she is suffering from anorexia, or a loss of appetite, which has brought her weight down to 135 lbs from 160 lbs in less than four months.

The senator has been on sick leave since Sept. 16 though she showed up at the Senate for a few hours yesterday and on Tuesday.

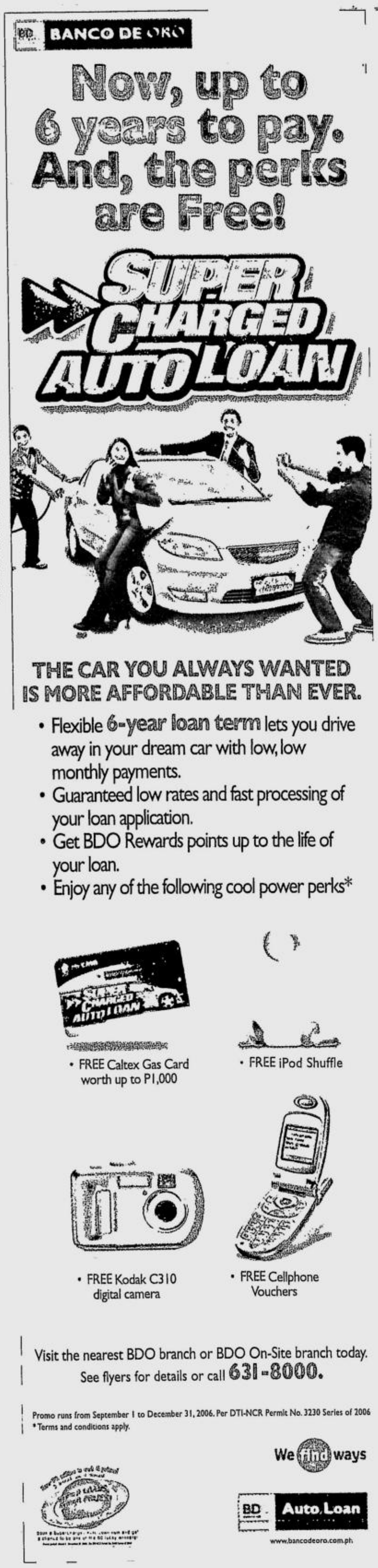
But she continues to lose weight, which she said has baffled her doctors.

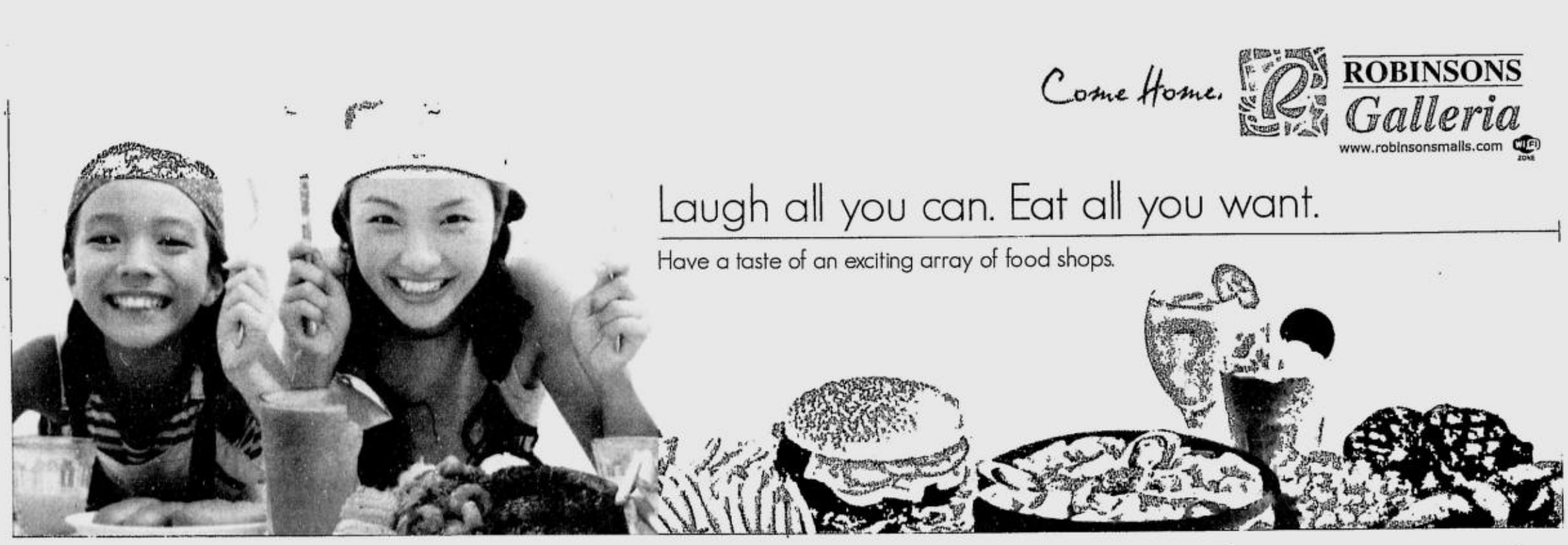
"My doctors cannot seem to locate the source of my anorexia. I cannot eat food because everything tastes sweet and it is possible that I may have to go to LA where my sister is a doctor in Cedars-Sinai hospital and get examined there all over again," Santiago said.

Santiago was examined by Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral, who is a cardiologist, and by kidney specialist Dr. Agnes Mejia and gastro-enterologist Dr. Eulenia Nicolas.

"I feel like I am going, going and will be soon be gone. Just call me the vanishing senator," she said.

Santiago said her problem appears to be not just medical but "attitudinal."





Pichay defends Ombudsman decision

By Philip C. Tubeza and Juliet Labog-Javellana

INSISTING THAT THE OFFICE OF the Ombudsman was constitutionally independent, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay yesterday defended its decision to clear Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos and other officials of criminal liability in the voided P1.3-billion poll automation deal.

Pichay, vice chair of the Commission on Appointments, said it would be highly questionable for the Supreme Court to dictate upon the Ombudsman regarding its investigation of the Comelec automation deal because the Ombudsman was "an independent constitutional body."

"There is no provision of the Constitution that says the (Supreme Court) can dictate upon the Ombudsman in an administrative manner, meaning, it cannot direct the Ombudsman to conduct a probe or to rule on a controversy in a certain manner," Pichay said in a statement.

"Thus, to assail the Ombudsman decision on the grounds that it runs counter to any (Supreme Court) ruling does not hold water," he said.

Pichay said the proper venue for the prosecution and punishment of erring Comelec commissioners was the House of Representatives, where an impeachment complaint could be filed against them.

House minority members continued to slam the Ombudsman's decision to reverse itself and exonerate the Comelec officials.

Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla said the Ombudsman decision set a dangerous precedent for graft cases.

"With the Ombudsman's decision on the Comelec, the way to stay out of jail once in government is to make sure no one can prove malice in making transactions and signing contracts that do not follow rules and are full of irregularities," Remulla said.

"Now no one will be held accountable for the billions in tax payers money lost to the suppliers—and God knows who else—of the ballot counting machines we will never use. I will not be surprised if more Pinoys of sound logic and intellect will want to migrate to other lands," he said.

Biazon seeks probe

By TJ Burgonio

AFTER BEING DELUGED WITH inquiries from military officers and their men, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon is seeking an inquiry into the impending closure of the 33-year-old Retirement and Separation Benefit System (RSBS) of the Armed Forces.

Biazon yesterday filed a resolution directing the committee on national defense to look into the status and eventual disposition of the much-dissipated RSBS fund in view of Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz's announcement he would stop its operations by Dec. 31.

He said he had gotten a barrage of text messages from soldiers asking about whether they could get back their annual contributions in full and whether the RSBS officials who had contributed to the dissipation of the fund over the past three decades would be prosecuted.

The senator, who chairs the defense committee, warned that unless these questions were addressed squarely, the beneficiaries, including active and retired personnel, would raise an uproar that could weaken the military.

Malacañang now distancing . . .

From page A1

would return home after the conference but was not expected at the office until Monday.

Roxas report

Lawyer Marina Demeterio, a member of the panel, told the INQUIRER that the panel considered all pleadings and pieces of evidence submitted by the respondents and complainants including the Ombudsman's own Field Investigation Office that cited Abalos' links to Mega Pacific Consortium executives.

"It should be proved that there was malice. A mere relation (between Abalos and the Tansipek spouses who have an ownership stake in Mega Pacific) is not irrelevant but it needs corroboration to show that there was malice (when Comelec cut the deal with the consortium)," Demeterio said.

Graft investigator Ma. Elena Olivia Roxas, in a comment submitted to the panel on Sept. 4, 2006, said the Ombudsman's Field Investigation Office found that the glaring violations in the bidding process pointed to a "well-defined" Comelec conspiracy to favor the Mega Pacific consortium.

Enough evidence

Roxas said the FIO found enough evidence to recommend that Abalos, the Comelec commissioners and MPC executives be held liable for the botched deal "criminally, administratively and civilly."

The panel, however, appeared unimpressed. "In law, there should be not just malice but evident malice," Demeterio said.

"The complainants can still file a motion for reconsideration," said Demeterio.

She said it was still possible for the panel to change its resolution clearing Abalos, Comelec commissioners and officers involved in the automation deal and Mega Pacific executives.

"It depends on the new evidence they will present when they file their motion for reconsideration," Demeterio said in an interview.

Different tune

Ermita said he "cannot make any comment on that (Ombudsman decision) because it is a matter between two separate bodies, the Ombudsman and the Supreme Court."

He said it was "improper for Malacañang to say anything either way because it is not right."

But on the day the Ombudsman announced its decision, Palace officials were singing a different tune.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the Ombudsman decision had given new impetus to a plan to use Mega Pacific's computers to fulfill President Macapagal-Arroyo's goal of computerizing the elections.

"We're still studying the implications of the Ombudsman decision but we can now see more avenues available to us to computerize the elections," said Defensor.

Among the options being considered, according to Defensor, was for Congress to legislate the use of Mega Pacific's machines in the 2007 polls.

Also, Ermita reiterated on Monday the Palace position that the Mega Pacific machines were the government's best option—both financially and logistically—in computerizing the elections within the next seven months.

The exoneration is a turnaround from the Supreme Court decision on the deal, according to former Senate President Jovito Salonga.

In its January 2004 decision, the Supreme Court said the contract violated the law and Comelec's bidding rules. The high court also said that Mega Pacific's counting machines were vulnerable to election fraud on a massive scale.

But an Ombudsman panel said the machines were accurate and the deal was not disadvantageous to the government.

The panel also reversed its ruling of June 28 that recommended the impeachment of Commissioner Resureccion Borra and the filing of charges against some Comelec officials and executives of Mega Pacific.

Flak expected

Demeterio said the panel expected the decision to be unpopular but said no political pressure was applied on the members to favor Abalos and the other respondents.

"We expected to receive flak. It's a very unpopular decision," she said.

Critics said the Ombudsman panel came up with the decision because of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo's influence over Gutierrez who was his classmate at the Ateneo Law School and of his close ties to Abalos.

"The only pressure we got was from the Supreme Court and that's time pressure," Demeterio said.

A check with the Bureau of Immigration showed that Gutierrez left on a Cathay Pacific flight for Hong Kong on Sept. 30 at 8:05 p.m.

The Ombudsman panel had until that date to submit to the Supreme Court its resolution on the poll automation deal.

The panel held a news conference on Monday late afternoon announcing its decision. However, copies of the 52-page decision containing Gutierrez's signature were not immediately available.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines Retirement and Separation Benefits System was established by virtue of Presidential Decree No. 361 signed in December 1973 and started in 1976. Its main objective was to create a fund scheme that would ensure the payment of pension to soldiers.

Starting with seed money of P200 million from the government, the principal funding sources of the RSBS were contributions from members of the AFP that amount to 5 percent of their monthly pay, and income from its investments. The RSBS invested heavily in real estate that rendered its assets vulnerable to the 1997 financial crisis.

In 1998, the RSBS losses called the attention of the Senate blue ribbon committee to carry out an inquiry into the funds.

Antipolo Properties Inc.

The committee found RSBS to have favored certain companies and even formed joint ventures with Antipolo Properties Inc. and Marilaque Land Inc., both of which were headed by former AFP Chief of Staff Lisandro Abadia. The companies reportedly received P2 billion worth of loans from RSBS.

In one of the hearings, retired RSBS official Col. Oscar Martinez alleged that Abadia asked money from RSBS funds for his failed senatorial bid in 1998.

In May 1999, Senate investigators asked government prosecutors to charge Abadia with violating the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for allegedly using RSBS funds for his private businesses. The committee also recommended former RSBS president Gen. Jose Ramiscal and Martinez to be investigated for allegedly violating the Anti-graft Law.

For his alleged role in the fund mess, Abadia's appointment in January 2001 as National Security Adviser was withdrawn by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Oakwood mutineers

In July 2003, among the issues raised by the Oakwood mutineers was the RSBS problem. They demanded that the government "update and accelerate the audit and ongoing investigation of the reported anomalies."

In August 2003, the Supreme Court revived the graft charges against Ramiscal and four others who allegedly converted to their personal use P250 million in RSBS funds. The Sandiganbayan dismissed the case in May 2000 for lack of jurisdiction but the high court ruled that the RSBS funds were public in nature.

In November 2003, military officials admitted in a Senate hearing that the RSBS had racked up P23 billion in unpaid obligations to retirees due to its losses.

P23B due retirees

In October 2004, the Office of the Ombudsman filed estafa charges in the Sandiganbayan against Ramiscal and three other RSBS officials Meinrado Enrique, Manuel Satulto and Capt. Perfecto Quilicot. The four allegedly overpriced the purchase of 148 lots by P167.6 million in 1996.

In August 2005, the Office of the Ombudsman filed graft charges against Abadia and eight other military officials in connection with the anomalies in the RSBS. *Mel Lawrence de Guzman, Inquirer Research*

RP beauty aboard hijacked Turkish plane

From page A1

view from Istanbul, Turkey, where she spent the night before flying back home to Manila.

"The other girls were on the verge of a breakdown ... I was just praying. I wanted to be strong for the other three girls," said Castillo, who won several awards but missed out on the top prizes.

Army deserter

Security officials in the southern Italian city of Brindisi, where the plane landed, said the unarmed hijacker did not know exactly what message to give to the Pontiff.

Giuseppe Giannuzzi, chief prosecutor in the nearby city of Lecce, told reporters that Ekinci had identified himself as a Christian, but the prosecutor said he did not have more details since the Turk had not yet been questioned.

Turkish officials said Ekinci was an Army deserter seeking political asylum, and added that earlier statements by some officials that he had hijacked the plane to protest the Pope's upcoming visit to Turkey were incorrect.

Pope visit

"From the onset of the events, there was no verified information that the hijacking was related to the Pope's visit," Turkish Transport Minister Binali Yildirim told The Associated Press.

The Turkish ambassador, Ugur Ziyal, was quoted yesterday by the state-owned Anatolia news agency as saying that it was a unique incident.

"The important point in this action is that this is definitely an individual action. As far as we know, the hijacker was unarmed," Ziyal said.

Ziyal said it was important not to link the incident to Turkey and the papal visit.

"The plane hijacking is an individual action by a man who was acting alone. On top of that, it is reported that he is not a Muslim but a Christian who was seeking the Pope's help."

The Turkish Airlines Boeing 737-400, flying from Albania to Istanbul, was hijacked in Greek airspace. It landed at Italy's Brindisi airport under escort by two Italian military planes.

No weapons found

"The man burst into the cockpit and said, 'There's two of us,'" leading authorities initially to believe the man was not acting alone, said an Italian security official based in Brindisi.

The official, speaking by telephone, gave details about the hijacking on condition his name not be used because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

"There was only one hijacker. He surrendered to authorities at the airport," the official said.

Another official, who also could not have his name used, said no weapons were found on Ekinci and police searching the plane also found no weapons.

The passengers were being questioned one by one to confirm their identities and rule out any possibility that the suspect had an accomplice, and were being flown to Istanbul sometime during the night.

Passengers unaware

Passenger Albert Okalari of Tirana, Albania, told reporters at the airport that passengers were unaware they were being hijacked until after the plane landed in Brindisi.

"They told us there was an engine problem and that the Istanbul airport was closed. Then the pilot changed directions, and I saw he was going west because I could see the sun," Okalari said.

He said passengers switched their cell phones on as soon as they landed, and immediately started getting reports that they had been hijacked, or that there was a problem with the plane. He only noticed the hijacker when the man was about to leave.

"We saw someone who said goodbye to us when he disembarked before we did, and we all clapped at him," Okalari said.

Istanbul's governor, Muammer Guler, said Ekinci was an Army deserter who had fled to Albania and was seeking political asylum. He said the Turkish Consulate in the Albanian capital had alerted Turkish authorities earlier on Tuesday that Ekinci had been denied political asylum there and was on the flight back to Turkey.

Letter to Pope

Had Ekinci arrived in Istanbul as scheduled he would have been detained for being a deserter, Guler said.

Ekinci, 28, had written to Pope Benedict in August to seek the Pontiff's help to avoid military service in his home country, Turkey's state-owned Anatolia news agency reported.

Other Turkish news reports said Ekinci had also converted from Islam to Christianity.

Salvatore Sciacchitano, deputy director of Italy's ENAC civil aviation agency, said the plane had been carrying 107 passengers and six crew.

A spokesperson for the Greek military's general staff told The Associated Press that four Greek fighter jets had been scrambled to shadow the plane after it issued a distress signal over Greek airspace.

The plane's captain issued an alert and was contacted by Greek air traffic controllers at 5:55 p.m. (10:55 p.m. Manila time) 25 km north of Thessaloniki, Stravropoulos said.

The captain, believing there were two hijackers aboard, told the Greek controllers: "I have two undesirable people who want to go to Italy to see the Pope and give him a message," Stravropoulos said.

The plane then contacted Italian air traffic controllers and asked to land in Brindisi, according to Nicoletta Tomiselli, an ENAC spokesperson. She said the aircraft was escorted to the ground by two Italian military planes.

Benedict angered Muslims

Benedict angered the Muslim world in a speech in Germany on Sept. 12, when he quoted a 14th century Byzantine emperor as saying: "Show me just what (the Prophet) Muhammad brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached."

Benedict has expressed regret for offending Muslims by his remarks and said they did not reflect his personal views, but he has not offered a complete apology as some had sought.

The Vatican on Tuesday said it had been going ahead with plans for the trip and a Vatican official, asked about the hijacking, said he expected no changes in the Pope's plans for the visit.

The official, who asked that his name not be used because of the sensitivity of the issue, said an official Vatican announcement that the trip would take place Nov. 28-Dec. 1 would be made soon. *With reports from Tarra V. Quismundo, Volt Contreras, AP*

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RSBS exits Dec. 31

From page A1

Although the RSBS would be deactivated, Cruz said soldiers would continue to contribute 5 percent of their basic pay to the fund.

The contributions and proceeds from the sale of RSBS real estate would be placed in trust funds with state-run banks Land Bank of the Philippines and Development Bank of the Philippines, according to Cruz.

He said the current members of the RSBS would get their contributions back with 6-percent annual interest upon retirement. Their pension will continue to be shouldered by the government.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, did not hide his exasperation at the mismanagement of the RSBS.

"The fund did not grow as it was supposed to. Our retired soldiers have not received a single centavo from the RSBS. Their pensions come from taxes," said Esperon, ex-officio chair of the RSBS board of trustees.

In 1998, RSBS assets stood at P15 billion but this has steadily decreased since then, according to Esperon.

The RSBS collects about P764 million in contributions from soldiers annually.

But P300 million alone goes to expenses—P210 million for operating expenses and P90 million in salaries for 200 officials and employees of the RSBS and allowances for its officials, Esperon said.

Defense Undersecretary Rodel Cruz said about P400 million was paid out annually to refund the contributions of retiring soldiers.

Idle P11.6-B real estate

The bulk of the remaining P11.6 billion assets of the RSBS is tied to nonperforming real estate and stocks.

Officials said they would sell the real estate assets so that soldiers, who contributed to the fund, would get paid upon retirement.

Defense Undersecretary Cecilio Lorenzo, who headed a defense department team that studied the RSBS, said that of the RSBS assets, P7.8 billion or 68 percent was locked in idle real estate while P1.8 billion or 24 percent was invested in stocks of little-known real estate firms.

He said real estate worth P1.9 billion would be more difficult to sell because they had land title and documentation "problems." The rest of the RSBS assets are in cash or stocks of other companies, which he did not identify.

Cruz said he was not yet sure about the actual market value of the RSBS' real estate holdings.

Dalmatians

Esperon said he was worried that RSBS assets were not liquid. "The lots are in patches and not grouped together. We call these dalmatians," said Esperon, referring to the breed of dogs with polka dots.

He said soldiers had long been worried about the RSBS, but he said the national government had given the assurance it would continue to shoulder the soldiers' pensions.

Back in 2003, President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the AFP top brass, who sit on the RSBS Board of Trustees, to sell the RSBS' real estate starting with the 102.9-hectare Riviera Golf Course and Country Club in Silang, Cavite.

The sale never took place.

Lorenzo said the RSBS was "fundamentally flawed" from the start.

Contributions low

Aside from bad investments, he said the soldiers' 5 percent payroll contribution was low compared with that of other state employees who are required to contribute 9 percent of basic pay to the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) along with a 12-percent counterpart contribution from their employer.

Lorenzo also noted that the government prescribed "too generous" pensions for soldiers, because pensions of retired soldiers were accordingly increased whenever the salaries of active duty soldiers were increased.

"Even the most prudent investment management cannot cope with pension payments," Lorenzo said. *With a report from AFP*

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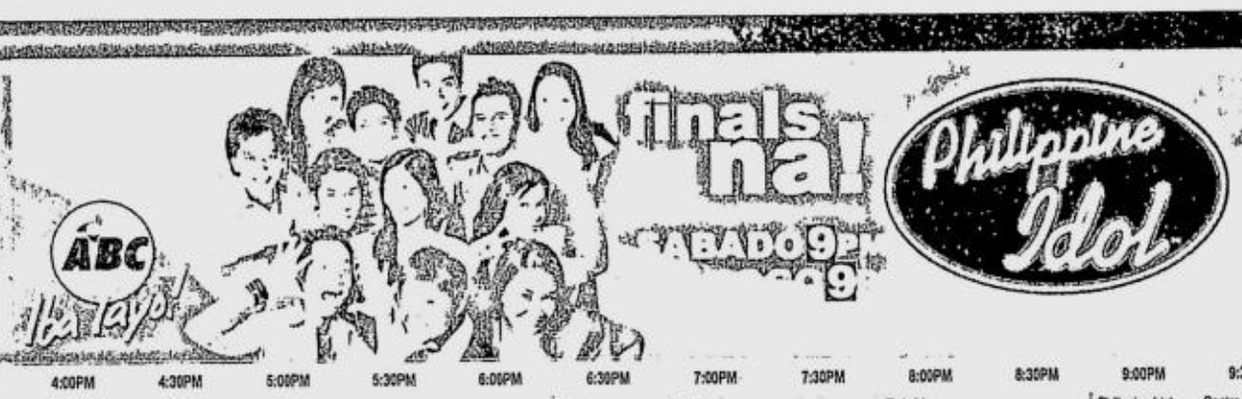
INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Thursday, October 5, 2006



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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				TNA Wrestling		TBA		Big News	S.O.S		Todo Max		Philippine Idol	Santro	Shorts		Letty La Mas Fab Back-to-back with Dodie Cleofe(rerun)	
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate! Japan	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Pangako Sa Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Bituing Walang Ningning	Crazy For You		Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	SOCO	Minda De Mujer
AXN		CSI: Miami (Season 4)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 5)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Samsung Sports World	Boosmaster		Maximum Exposure (Season I)		Fear Factor (Season VI)		The Contender (Season II)		Supernatural (Season I)		Lost (Season II)	
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel	Robotboy	Mirumo De Pon	Pokemon: Johto Journey	Digi Justisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King
Cinema One		Don't Cry For Me Papa				Ang Lahat Ng Ito Pati Na Langit				Testigo				Shake Rattle & Roll 2				Ghost	
Cinemax			Kenedy Vs Cobra (3:25PM)			Blade Squad			Fast Company			Evil Has A Face			Somebody Has To Shoot The Picture (9:35PM)				Taking Lives (11:20PM)
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	Inside The Middle East/CNN Business Traveler/Global Office/Global Challenges	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Psychic Detectives	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Bones		Treasure Hunters		E-Ring	
Discovery Channel		Psychic Witness		Kings Of Construction		Raw Nature		Deadliest Catch		Engineering Series		Building The Ultimate	Connect	Mythbusters		Innovation On The Fast Track		Power Zone	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Ad Attack/Un-Bikiniive Bunny	Sure Life Of Zack And Cody	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Monster Allergy	Lizzie Maguire	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Cheerleading		Watersports Programming Hot Water		Motorsport Asia	Cheerleading	Major League Baseball Division Series						Sportscenter Asia	World Pool League '05 Poland		World Pool League '05 Poland		Sportscenter Asia
ETC		American Dreams		Change of Heart	Eliminate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Will & Grace 4	Friends 10	Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (Degeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Nanny 911		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Cenacle Of Divine Mercy	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Virtue Storybook	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	The Catholic Church Through The Ages	Special Programming		EWTN Live (Encore) With Fr. Mitch Pacwa		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Seven Sacraments	Images of Mary	Behold the Man: Spiritually for Men	The Journey Home Encore	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Langit	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Panaklabago (3:45 PM)		Salyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		Bakekang (8:50 PM)	Love Story In Harlem	Magpakailanman			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B.I.	Harriet The Spy	Mcleod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Just Cause		Spooks		Wife In The Blood		Regenesis	
HBO				Growing Pains: Return Of The Seavers							Uncle Buck (7:20 PM)			Daylight				Saint Ange	
Hero TV	Angelic Layer	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Super A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Salyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Aji-kko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	BBDaman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	AmDriver	Angelic Layer	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics Amis	Just For Laughs	Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics Amis	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Ionita	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		Smackdown				X-Men	The Batman	Experience		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Good Finds	Distraction	Benzal	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Food 911	Who's Wedding Is It Anyway?	TRL		Martha	The Hills	Your Pavata Island	Genuine Article	El True Hollywood Story	
MTV Philippines		Handpicked Haze	VH1 All Access: Pam & Nikki Uncovered	VH1 All Access: How Thin Is Too Thin?	Punk'd	The Hills	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	Ultrasound Hale			Punk'd		Diary of Hoobastank	Sessions Hale	VH1 All Access: Awesomely Bad Cameo Movies	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX News	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Presents		MYX Bandalito	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXilog
National Geographic		Dream Jets		Megastructures		Nat Geo Encores		Marco Polo: China Mystery	Marco Polo: China Mystery	Footballer & Beauty Queen		About Asia		Nat Geographic Specials		Naked Science		Hollywood Science	
NBN		Telediyaryo Alas-Tres		Telediyaryo Sports Alsp.			Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Telediyaryo Wil Ray, Lipat & Angelique Lazo				Equilibrium		Telediyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-ala Sa Usang Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Gabay Sa Katusugan	Ang Mga Nagsi-ala Sa Dating Daan		Ang Pagbubuyag		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	SpongeBob SquarePants: Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Jessica Alfaro Story				Hacienda				Imagine Regine				Annie B.				Bivaheng Langit
Qtv	Starry Starry Night	Shaman King	Battle B-Daman	BB Daman Bakugaiden	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle		Family Zoo		News On Q	Women's Desk		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	The 4400		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Just For Laughs	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Friends Again		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports								Billards: WC Pool		WPT Tour				Banquet 400 Highlights		Sportsdesk		Autofocus	
Star Movies			The Ladykillers (3:45 PM)				Catch That Kid			Operation Dumbo Drop				Soul Plane			Family Friday (10:25PM)		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Hope & Faith	According To Jim	The Office	Two And A Half Men	The Drew Carey Show	Sons & Daughters	Seinfeld	Hope & Faith
Studio 23								Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup	Two And A Half Men	Joey	Stacked	Grey's Anatomy		News Central	Oprah (10:45PM)		MYXilog

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Days of monster billboards numbered

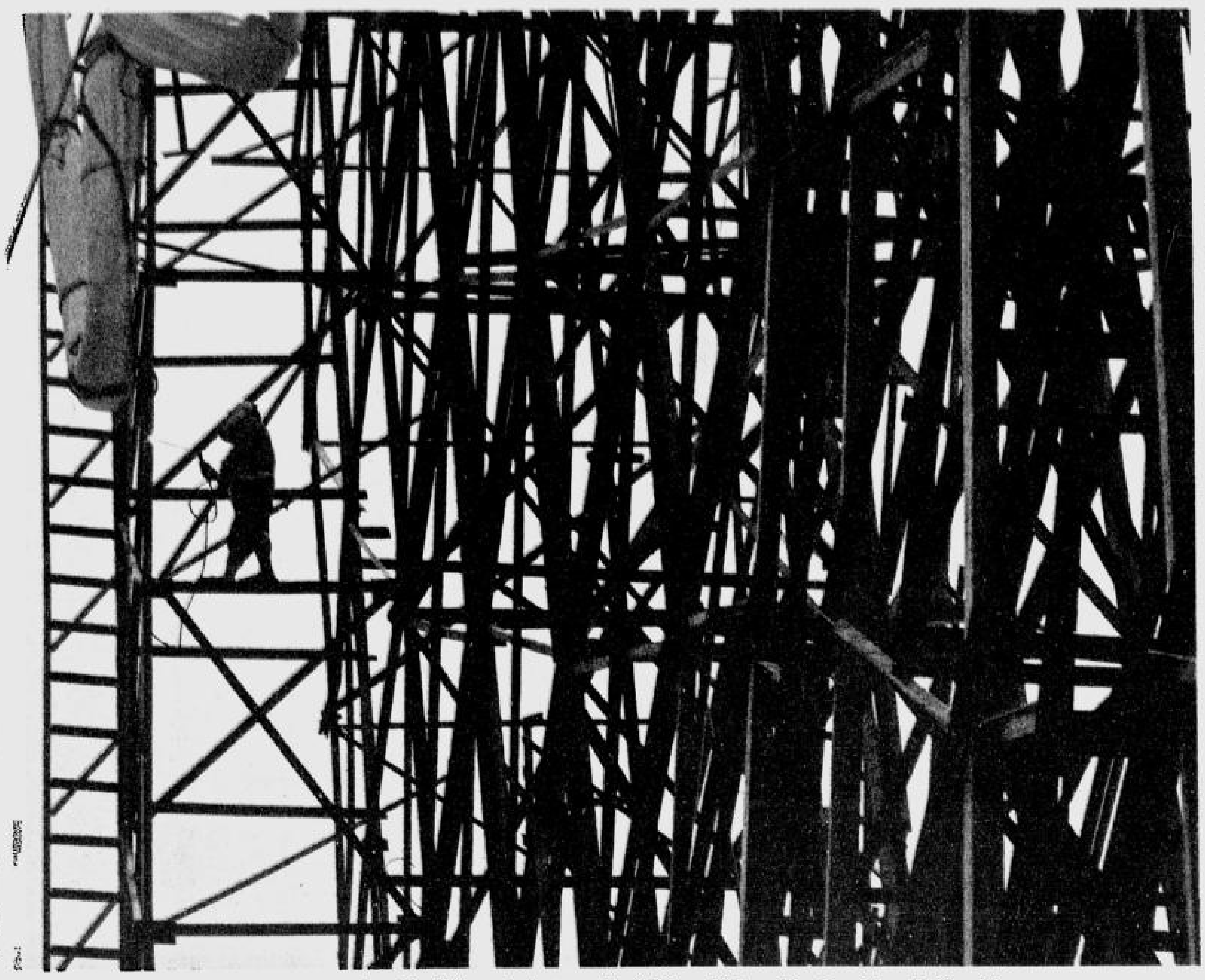
From page A1

Administrative Order No. 160, which was released yesterday, directed the tearing down of billboards that posed imminent danger or threat to life, health, safety and property of the public; that violate applicable rules; that were constructed without permits; and that were set up along thoroughfares.

Public Works Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane was directed to inspect billboards and pinpoint those that were hazardous and posed imminent danger. He was also tasked to investigate and file appropriate charges against their owners.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that corporate advertisers on giant billboards—a P2-billion industry—should also be made accountable for damage caused by their outdoor ads. "Of course, they are liable under the Civil Code," Gonzalez said.

Santiago said the President's order was consistent with the provisions of her Senate Bill No. 1714. The bill seeks to ban oversized billboards which obscure traffic and endanger public safety in the country's major thoroughfares.



NAKED STEEL FRAMES are all that remain of the billboards destroyed by "Milenyo" along Edsa Guadalupe in Mandaluyong. EDWIN BACASMAS

SANTIAGO

EBDANE

GONZALEZ

Seminary's giant billboard

"So in effect, there is no more future for these giant billboards; they will be taken down despite of course the pained objections of those earning money in that industry," Santiago told reporters.

She said the billboard owners had no chance in fighting it out in court. The senator added that Ebdane would be empowered to tear down the giant killer billboards as soon as the AO was handed down.

"And so there is no hope at this point that these billboards can be used again. If I were the owner of a billboard, I would take it away myself and sell it as junk rather than wait for the government to expropriate it," Santiago said.

She said even the Church-owned giant billboard at the San Carlos Seminary along Guadalupe-Edsa could be taken down whether or not the bishops agree.

Revilla amendments

Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr., chair of the Senate public works committee, has proposed amendments to the bill, including allowing signs that could withstand wind gusts of not less than 240 kph, a magnitude 7 earthquake and must come with insurance coverage.

Milenyo had peak winds in excess of 130 kph when it struck Metro Manila.

Also yesterday, Emmanuel Cuntapay, a director of the Department of Public Works and Highways, said after a tour of the capital that about 97 percent of 2,800 billboards examined did not comply with the National Building Code and would have to be dismantled or altered.

Cuntapay said that according to the NBC, the height of billboards should not exceed 3.60 meters, while its surface area should not exceed 30 square meters.

He also said local government officials should not only enforce but also comply with the building code in putting up their own billboards.

Setting the example

"For those government officials, we have to be an example. We have to put a stop to this because all banners and posters should be subject to government fees and regulations. Mayors should also put a stop to this because if the government will not do so, who else would believe us?" Cuntapay told reporters.

But Cuntapay also said billboards put up by the local executives would be allowed for a "grace period" of five days, since these signs usually contain congratulatory messages, for example to graduates, or greetings during fiestas, which do not need to be displayed for long.

As for billboards of the President and those announcing government projects, he said these would be allowed because these contain information about where the taxes are spent and because these are not big and do not distract people.

According to Cuntapay, the DPWH would also allow billboards that display the establishment's business, and ground signs. He also said billboards on the walls of media companies like GMA-7, which feature their shows, would be allowed. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Leila B. Salaverria*

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PROGRAMME

DAY 1

8:00 - 9:00 • Registration
9:00 - 10:30 • Parade of Colors
• Invocation & National Anthem — Philippine Madrigal Singers
• Welcome Remarks/Opening Address — Dr Mina T. Gabor, *President, Philippine Small and Medium Business Development Foundation(PHILSMED)*
• Formal Signing Cooperation Agreement — www.peoplink.org and PHILSMED Foundation
• Inspirational Message — Dan Salcedo, *Founder*, www.peoplink.org/www.calges.com
• Introduction of Keynote Speaker — Ms Dittas Formoso, *President, Information Technology Association of the Philippines(ITAP)*
• Keynote Speech — Philip Bond, *President, Information Technology Association of America, USA*
10:30 - 11:00 COFFEE BREAK - RAFFLE DRAW OF PRIZES
11:00 - 11:30 • Is Asean the Door for Philippines To Develop Worldwide Contact — Dr. Philip Dews, *UK, Moderator, Asean Regional Business Forum*
11:30 - 12:00 • ICT Roadmap that will impact SME growth — Ramon P. Sales, *Chairman, Commission on Information and Communications Technology*
12:00 - 1:30 • Luncheon Keynote Speaker & Guest of Honor "DTI's commitment to Philippine ICT for SMEs" — Hon. Peter B. Favila, *Secretary, Department of Trade & Industry(DTI)*
• Launching of OTOP Website — Sec. Peter Favila and Usec. Carissa Cruz, *Department of Trade & Industry(DTI)*
1:30 - 3:30 • Successes/ Challenges in Utilizing ICT in new and Non-TraditionalBusinesses
Moderator Reginald Nery, *Partner, KPMG Laya Mananghaya & Co*
Joey Gurango, *Founder/CEO, Gurango Software*; Francisco "Paco" Sandejas, Ph.D., *Managing Partner, Narra Venture Capital*; Artemio "Junie" Pama, Jr., *Country Manager, Five9 Phils.*; Ryk Ramos, *e-Commerce Director, B2Bpricenow.com*; Honorable Feliciano Belmonte, Jr., *Mayor, Quezon City*; Angelo Garreon M. Perez, *Chief Information Officer, National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)*
3:30 - 4:00 COFFEE BREAK - RAFFLE DRAW OF PRIZES
4:00 - 4:30 • Legal Process Implications in Developing Business Opportunities — Atty. Liwayway Vinzon-Chato, *Former BIR Commissioner & Managing Partner, Chato-Vinzon Law Office*
• Saving and Wealth Strategies for SMEs — Francisco J. Colayco, *Chairman, Colayco Foundation for Education*
4:30 - 5:00 • Value of Respecting Intellectual Property to Business Growth — Atty. Eduardo C.Escaño, *Center for Intellectual Property Education, Information Dissemination and Exchange (CENTIPEDE) - Asia*
5:00 - 5:30 • Creating a Competitive Regulatory Environment to Induce ICT Growth — Ronald O. Solis, *Commissioner, National Telecommunications Commission*
5:30 • Bulong Pulungan sa BizOps 2007 - "Enabling the Businessmen in the Countryside to Share the Business in ICT"
Moderator Julie Yap Daza and Deedee Siytangco
Jose Joevel Rivera, *Head, Product Development, Bayan Telecommunications Holdings Corporation*; Artemio "Junie" Pama, Jr., *Country Manager, Five9 Phils.*; Mr. George Kintanar, *Consultant, Committee on ICT, House of Representatives*; Ramon Isberto, *Head of Public Affairs, Smart Communications Inc.*; Alfredo Solis, *Head of Public Affairs, Digital Telecommunications Phils., Inc. (DIGITEL)*; Professor Andy Ferreria, *Dean, Asian Institute of Management (AIM)*

DAY 2

8:00 - 9:00 • Registration
9:00 - 10:00 • Forward ICT Philippines: Linking up of Academe, Private Sector, Government and the International Market
Special Message — Dr. Estrella F. Alabastro, *Secretary, Department of Science & technology*
1:00 • Technology Solutions for SME's *(Panel Discussion)*
Moderator: Ibarra C. Gutierrez, *Editor-in-Chief, Computerworld Philippines*
Ricardo Banaag, *Country Manager, Intel Microelectronics Phils.*; Augusto Lagman, *Chairman & CEO, Vinta Systems, Inc*; Donald Lim, *President & CEO, Yehey.com*; Kris Delloro, *Channel Distribution Program Manager, Sun Microsystems Philippines Inc*
11:00 - 12:00 • Putting Digital Content Center Stage Philippines, a Reliable Partner *(Panel Discussion)*
Moderator David Fernando, *Managing Director, Technology Support Services, Inc*
Judd Gallares, *President & COO, GMA New Media Inc*; Jose Benjamin Colayco, *COO, Level Up Inc*; Jaime Enrique Y. Gonzales, *President/Managing Director, IPVG*; Roland Benzon, *Director for Business Development, Chikka, Inc*; Neil Dagondon, *President, Anino Entertainment*
12:00 - 2:00 • BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS(Separate Program)
2:00 - 2:15 • Predictions / Trends in ICT — Mr. Peter Wallace, *President, AYC Consultants*
2:15 - 3:30 • Revenue Opportunities in the ICT Enabled Businesses
Moderator Romulo R. Agatep, *Past President, Philippine Electronics and Telecommunications Federations, Inc. (PETEF)*
Danilo Sebastian Reyes, *Country Manager, Clientlogic*; Victor Gruet, *President, Symphony Consulting*; Juanloz Botor, *President & CEO, Text Switch Unlimited Inc*; Marie Grace Dimaranan, *President, Animation Council of the Phils. Inc*; Rita Cruz, *Senior Executive, Accenture*
3:30 - 3:45 COFFEE BREAK - RAFFLE DRAW OF PRIZES
3:45 - 6:00 • Country ICT Experiences in Encouraging SME Business — *Speakers from UK, Canada, Australia, India, Japan****
Moderator Dr. Philip Dews, UK, *Asean Regional Business Forum*
Richard Mills - *Canada*; Masahiro Uchibori - *Japan*
6:00 • Business Networking/Employment Opportunities & Product Presentation
RAFFLE DRAW OF PRIZES

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Budget cart overtakes Cha-cha train

By Michael Lim Ubac

FLOOR DELIBERATIONS ON THE PROPOSED P1.1-trillion national budget for 2007 have overtaken the Charter change express.

The House majority yesterday decided to put off plenary debate on the resolution seeking to convert Congress into a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution.

"The constraint is time. We're running out of time," said Majority Leader Prospero Nograles as the chamber started plenary debates on the budget bill yesterday.

He said priority is being given to the budget bill to allow the lower chamber to pass it before it adjourns on Oct. 13, and give enough time for the Senate to pass it before the New Year.

The Charter change resolution approved by the House committee on constitutional amendments last month can wait till November, said Nograles.

Speaker Jose de Venecia agreed to the deferment, "so as not to confuse the people on the legal issues pending in the Supreme Court."

The high court is expected to rule next week on a petition seeking the voiding of the decision of the Commission on Elections to junk the petition for a people's initiative to amend the Constitution.

Nograles said that during the three-week congressional break, the SC should have already resolved the people's initiative case.

"If the ruling is favorable, then we have no problem. If it's unfavorable, then we should go to the second mode, the constituent assembly," he said.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, chair of the House appropriations committee, formally sponsored the budget bill in plenary late Tuesday, a day after it was passed by his committee.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, October 5, 2006
26th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Job 19:21-27
Gospel: Luke 10:1-12

The Lord appointed 72 other disciples and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place, where he himself was to go. And he said to them, "The harvest is rich, but the workers are few. So you must ask the Lord of the harvest to send workers to his harvest. Courage! I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Set off without purse or bag or sandals; and do not stop at the homes of those you know.

Whatever house you enter, first bless them saying: 'Peace to this house.' If a friend of peace lives there, the peace shall rest upon that person. But if not, the blessing will return to you. Stay in that house eating and drinking at their table, for the worker deserves to be paid. Do not move from house to house.

When they welcome you in any town, eat what they offer you. Heal the sick who are there and say to them: 'The kingdom of God has drawn near to you.'

But in any town where you are not welcome, go to the marketplace and proclaim: Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off and leave with you. But know and be sure that the kingdom of God had come to you.' I tell you that on the Judgment Day it will be better for Sodom than for this town."

Commentary

Job cries pity from his friends, wanting his words forged in stone so that others will know what he suffered, yet he declares that God is his Avenger, the Last, and that he will one day set him close to him, take his side and let his eyes gaze on him who is his rock forever.

Jesus goes to his friends, sending them out to bring others into his community, seeking others with the reality of Peace, sharing what is given them, offering the kingdom in return—the presence of God among us in Word, Body and community. We are told again that the kingdom is near—are we aware of how close our God is, and how close judgment is upon us too?

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: cci@claret.org; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2006

ISSN 0116-2642 INQUIRER Vol. 21 No. 299

OPINION

Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•Subscription Hotline 896-6000

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Life and death

EDITORIALS

ONE WEEK AFTER TYPHOON "MILENYO" RIPPED through parts of the Visayas and Luzon, officials are still counting the dead and the damage it caused to crops, infrastructure and property. But with the death toll rising to 110 as of last night, and with losses estimated to surpass P1 billion, Milenyo now seems headed into the record books as one of the most destructive typhoons to hit the country, at least in recent years. As Filipinos in the affected areas continue to rebuild and try to return to their normal lives, the puzzle that continues to nag is how a weather disturbance that was not even officially classified as a supertyphoon could leave so much devastation.

On Wednesday last week, even as Milenyo lashed the island of Samar, the weather bureau or Pagasa placed its winds at 130 kph. Pagasa stuck to that forecast as the typhoon moved up to Bicol, Southern Tagalog and Metro Manila. By evening, CNN was forecasting winds of 210 kph.

So who got it right? Pagasa says both were correct; the difference in readings came about because different systems were used. Pagasa uses a 10-minute average to measure wind speed, while the Joint Typhoon Warning System based in Guam averages wind speed every minute. "If you average wind speed using one minute, the frequency of a certain speed occurs several times. The frequency of occurrence heightens the intensity if you measure every minute," Pagasa's Nathaniel Cruz said.

While there may be a scientific explanation to a puzzling discrepancy in forecasts, there can be no debating the effects of Milenyo. It might have been categorized as typhoon, but the devastation it left was that of a supertyphoon, going by the nation's experience. This is not to say that Pagasa was wrong. But the weather bureau has to explain why a typhoon packing 130 kph winds could have the destructive force Filipinos have learned to associate with far stronger supertyphoons. The difference between Pagasa's forecast of 130 kph and the Guam weather bureau's 210 kph could have spelled the difference between taking precautions and taking it easy. And for those who perished in the typhoon, that might have been the difference between life and death.

Top in its class

THE RECENT REPORT THAT SOUTHERN LEYTE schools swept the first 10 places in the latest National Achievement Test (NAT) administered to some 35,000 public elementary schools all over the country seems to suggest new hope and new possibilities for Philippine education.

But that bit of news shouldn't be surprising. Southern Leyte had earlier cornered the top three places in this school year's NAT for first-year high school, and first place in the NAT for fourth-year high school.

What makes those schools in Southern Leyte tick? The province is among the beneficiaries of an Asian Development Bank-funded education program. But availability of funds does not automatically translate into academic excellence as Aniceto M. Sobrepeña, president of Metrobank Foundation Inc., has observed. Referring to the billions of pesos the League of Corporate Foundations has poured into education programs, he wrote recently in the INQUIRER: "So much money, so much energy, so much generosity" don't seem to be reaping the kind of fruits expected and "seem to have had little impact on the overall quality of education."

Southern Leyte Division Superintendent Violet Alocija attributed her division's astonishing feat to the support extended by the students, teachers and parents to the division's academic program. And Gov. Rosette Lerias explained it by saying that "prioritizing education by the province's leadership may have borne fruit with the feat of our students."

But this is not the first time we have heard claims of cooperation or special funding or giving priority to education. In other words, there must be other reasons for the success of Southern Leyte's schools. Education officials cannot go wrong if they invested a little time and effort to look deeper into this "phenomenon" of a poor province managing to leave much richer provinces behind in terms of producing students who learn very well the lessons they are taught in their classrooms. In the process, they may yet find what is needed to reverse the decline in the quality of Philippine education.

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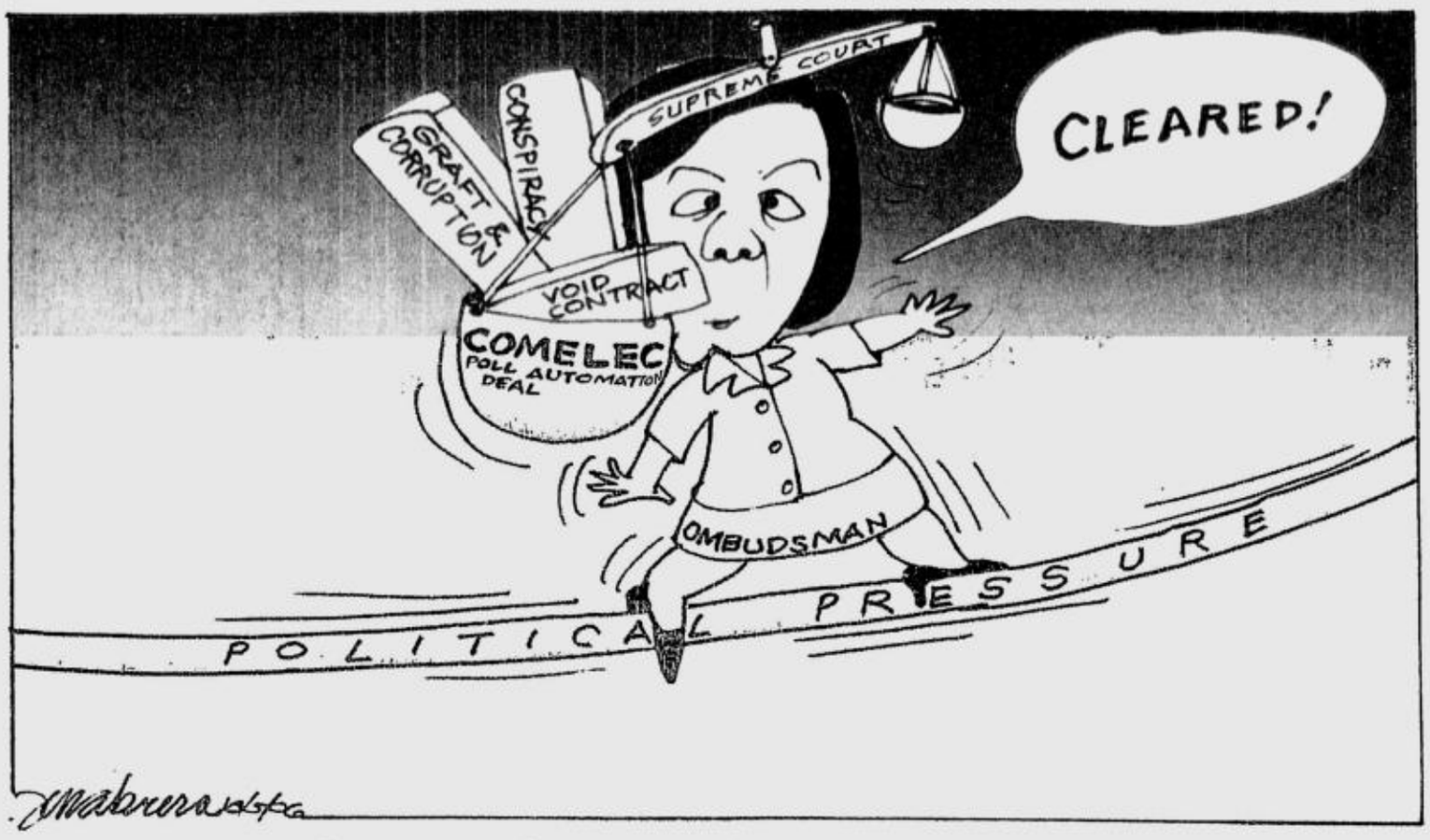

Borrowing against tomorrow

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A CONTROVERSY IS ROCKING CEBU OVER the spreading water shortage that could turn it into a dessicated wasteland.

Babies and migrants tripled Cebu's population in 40 years. They splashed, drank and washed through 94 million cubic meters last year. Demand will surge to 210 mcm/year in 2030. By then, Cebu's population would tap home 4.3 mcm of water.

The gap in supply is closed by "borrowing against tomorrow." Metro Cebu sucks 275,000 cubic meters daily from its small aquifers—double what they can recharge. Salt now taints a full third of its aquifers. Water tables have plummeted to twice as deep as 10 years back.

Concerned over his city's own shortage, the Dumaguete mayor banned Cebu vessels from taking on water when they dock. Boholanos bucked a proposal that would draw, through a submarine cable, water from Inabanga River to Cebu.

Thus, Cebu clones a Parañaque held hostage by water vendors or, as The New York Times notes, India's emerging dust bowls in Rajastan, Haryana and Tamil Nadu.

"Indians are tapping groundwater faster than nature can replenish it, so fast they're hitting deposits formed at the time of the dinosaurs," the Times' Ruth Fremson writes. "The water is almost gone." And so are the food, land and jobs.

Why then are some officials upset over a consortium's proposal to pipe 40,000 cubic meters of water daily from Carmen town? Wouldn't that benefit a metropolis whose economy is 99 percent dependent on water "mined" from collapsing aquifers?

In cooperation with the World Bank, Ayala, Stateland Equity and Viscal corporations negotiated the proposal with a strained Metro Cebu Water District that serves only 55 percent of residents. Completing detailed National Economic Development Agency reviews, the consortium is ready for a "Swiss challenge" as provided by law.

Cebu business chambers and mayors in the project area backed the proposal. Failure by the city and provincial governments to provide adequate water hobbled their firms. "We don't care where the water comes from, provided we get it," they said. But objections suddenly erupted. "It is a puzzlement," as Yul Brynner said in "The King And I" film.

There's no puzzle here. It's only the "politics of water." Like other places, Cebu has a glut of back-stepping leaders who posture as if they're moving forward. Their objections cloak their failure to devise long-term solutions for a water crisis they have ignored.

"I'm not against the proposal," began Mayor Tomas Osmeña at a public hearing. With support from the provincial capitol, he cited "flaws" in the proposal. The price at P25 per cubic meter was prohibitive. No new technology was involved. Legal flaws marred the proposal.

He'd "level the playing field" for competitors by yanking out a P200-million provision to refund the consortium for development costs, if it lost a Swiss challenge. He would sue the World Bank for "conflict of interest" since its affiliate was part of the consortium.

These sound bites play to the gallery. But they duck tough and essential decisions: pricing water at its economic cost, and implementing harsh penalties for waste. Neither do they bring a single drop of water to Cebu.

In fact, Osmeña's pride—the 297 South Reclamation Project—is water short. Oil hovers at $70 a barrel. Thus, the energy-intensive process of desalination will peg SRP water at P62 per cubic meter. Potential investors are balking.

"Dry faucets can quickly turn into ugly political unrest," the Manila Bulletin Yearbook notes. And "agitation is a poor substitute for policy .... It does not craft a strategy to usher Cebuanos into an era of radically reduced. (Failing) to reverse ecological decay, Cebuanos today prepare to pass on their unpaid ecological IOUs to the next generation—as their fathers did before them."

Dodging issues is an old game. In 1995, then Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia predicted: "By 1998, Cebu will be swamped in excess water. If need be, we'll lease supertankers to bring water from Ormoc."

Today, one out of every four people in Cebu drinks from polluted wells, locking towns in recurring gastro outbreaks, says the UN Human Development Report. Its at par with Senegal and Krygistan. Garcia's successor and daughter, the well-meaning Governor Gwendolyn, must untangle problems dear old dad left.

In Metro Cebu, industries are saddled with hefty extra water bills. Like Indonesia's *betchak* drivers, Cebu slum dwellers pay ambulant peddlers over thrice the cost of piped water. "We pay more for our cholera," says a nun who works with the poor.

For years, Osmeña scoffed at the water issue. He ignored studies that tracked, since 1972, relentless salt intrusion into inland aquifers. His inaugural address focused on "major issues," i.e., legalizing cockfights and taxes.

Osmeña and Garcia in 1997, dismissed complaints of falsified watershed maps. Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and businessmen got President Ramos to issue Proclamation 1017, to safeguard the watersheds. Snickers caused Osmeña to drop his plan to make denuded tropical Cebu a clone of the semi-temperate model of Lake Arrowhead in the United States. He rejected a water master plan prepared with Dutch government support.

"Ayala has done more for Cebu than many other entities," Sun Star editor Pacicho Seares wrote. "Tomas (Osmeña) has said a lot more than others about defending the city."

All eight Millennium Development Goals have "one factor in common: water," Asian Development Bank president Haruhiko Kuroda told a conference to reverse the slump in financing for water. India and the Philippines will miss the 2015 target for halving the proportion of people that lack clean water.

And Cebu's "leaders" show why this is so.

* * *

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A man named Bolles

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

A FILIPINO REPORTER FROM CHICAGO brought this to my attention after I spoke on the killings in the Philippines last weekend in Honolulu. You might want to look up the case of Don Bolles, he said, you might find it interesting. I did, and did.

The case of Don Bolles is now a watershed in American journalism. Bolles was a reporter of the Arizona Republic in the 1960s and 1970s. He specialized in ferreting out wrongdoing. Which took the form of organized crime, specifically as practiced by the Mafia, and corruption in high places, specifically as committed by state water and tax commissioners. He honed his investigative skills over the years, developing an uncanny ability to sniff out irregularities and finding proof for them. He was intrepid to the core, probably way up there as one of the leaders of "X-investigative journalism," if there was such a category. Once, he gathered the names of around 200 Mafia members and their associates operating in Arizona and exposed them in an article.

His articles catapulted him to the top of the heap, making him a member of the journalism elite. But success came with a terrible price. He started getting death threats, and after a while he took precautions against them. Every day, he taped the hood of his car with a Scotch tape to make sure his engine hadn't been tampered with. Legend has it he eventually got tired of doing it and so paid the price. On the day he left his hood untouched, his car exploded from a bomb in downtown Arizona.

The truth wasn't less dramatic. It was his eighth wedding anniversary that day, June 2, 1976, and he and his wife had planned to go out after work. But that noon, he got a call from an informant about a crooked land deal involving top state officials. He left a note on his typewriter saying he would be going to a hotel downtown and would be back at 1:30 p.m. He got to the Hotel Clarendon past noon and spoke with someone on the phone. After that, he went back to his car in the parking lot near the hotel and started the engine. As he was backing out, his car exploded.

Six sticks of dynamite had been planted underneath it and set off by remote. Even if he had taped the hood of his car that day, he would still have died.

The murder set off a tidal wave of grief and anger not just in Arizona but across the land. If his murderers had thought to cow the media and the community, they thought wrong. Mourning swiftly turned to outrage. The American media community came together and in a magnificent, unprecedented, and never-to-be-repeated show of solidarity, 38 journalists from 28 newspapers and TV stations mounted a collective effort to pursue the story Bolles began. Some were paid for by their organizations, others did it on their own time. They were headed by one of my favorite writers, Bob Greene. The result of their efforts was a 23-part series that appeared in newspapers across the country. The national attention forced the Arizona legislature to put public deals under a microscope. It also wiped out Mafia activity in Arizona.

The killers were apprehended and brought to justice. On June 13 that year, 11 days after Bolles' car exploded, police arrested John Harvey Adamson, a racing-dog owner. He admitted planting the bomb, turned state witness and pointed to two others, Max Dunlap, a Phoenix contractor, and James Robison, as being part of the plot. The following year, Dunlap and Robison were found guilty and sentenced to death.

Next year, Bolles will be honored with a place in the Newseum in Washington, D.C., when it reopens. It is a museum dedicated to recollecting the life and work of outstanding journalists. Since the nation's journalists descended on Arizona to finish what Bolles began, no journalist has been murdered in America.

I don't know why we can't take off from that lead. I don't know why our national media can't bestir itself and go beyond token condemnations of the murders of the journalists in the countryside—which, to repeat, is where they are happening—and form a team from the different newspapers, TV and radio stations to investigate the murder of at least one journalist who was patently doing his job. Preferably with the backing of our organizations—we can forget government intervention, we will be hindered, not helped, by it—and the moral, if not financial, backing of the international media and human rights organizations. I don't know why we can't publish or air our findings locally and internationally and make the killers at least morally reprehensible and at most legally indictable.

I don't know why we can't put up a small-scale equivalent of a Newseum to extol the virtues of the heroic dead and, better still, to provide subsidy for those they left behind. Alongside putting the fear of God and global censure in the hearts of malefactors, it should help to put inspiration in the minds of those who are in the profession or dream of being so.

The point is to show the warlords, drug and gambling lords, and overbearing lords in public office, civilian, military and police, who are responsible for a great many of these killings that those killings can be epically counterproductive. That those killings carry with them a huge price tag. That with the help of the national and international media, their illegal activities can at least be severely curbed, if not wiped off the face of the earth.

I grant it's not easy. Nothing good is, in this country more than others. But I don't know how much longer we can survive, physically and spiritually, with unrelenting proof that *doon po sa amin*, where we live, good is always punished and evil rewarded. There is only one thing worse than being dead, as I keep saying.

That is being dead while being alive.

Good news about our forests

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

AMONG THE BIGGEST CASUALTIES IN THE recent typhoon were our trees, many of them over a century-old. In Fort Bonifacio and environs, old giant acacia trees fell alongside five- and 10-year-old trees. Friends in the provinces complained about the similar fate of their trees. I feel very sad about this, for one of the things I found so beguiling about Honolulu are the abundance of sprawling, carefully preserved trees, aside from its world-famous ocean, year-round balmy weather and a clean environment that have made Hawaii—now serviced by direct flights from Manila by Philippine Air Lines three times a week—a top tourist destination even among Filipinos.

* * *

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources should make an in-depth study about why so many trees were felled. Was it just the strength of Milenyo (what's the correct reading—130 kph, 160 kph or 260 kph)? Or was it the way the trees were planted? Was it the failure to prune them early on, because the concerned government agencies failed to inform people about the typhoon's real strength?

Among the many affected cities and towns, Angeles City was perhaps the earliest to get back power, thanks to the decisiveness and foresight of Angeles Electric Corporation, headed by its GM, engineer Geromin "Gerry" T. Nepomuceno Jr. When he realized that Napocor couldn't restore the power yet, he drew on the corporation's reserved power, so there was hardly any interruption. But the Angeleños also pointed out that their power firm always prune the city's trees every time a typhoon approaches, and this practice has minimized damage to power lines and saved trees. Other towns and cities should learn from Angeles Electric's example.

* * *

While on this subject, I'm happy to learn from former Sen. Heherson Alvarez that one of his pet projects during his two years as environment secretary (January 2001-December 2002)—a multi-billion agro-industrial project that would make verdant the denuded forests of Agusan in Mindanao—is on track again, after being shelved by his successor. In fact, he said President Macapagal-Arroyo has scheduled its formal implementation this December, when Prime Minister Helen Clark of New Zealand (one of the two co-proponent countries) attends the coming Asean and East Asian Summit of Leaders in Cebu.

Inked in December 2001 between Shannalyne, Inc., a corporation owned by Cheow Teck Tan, a New Zealander of Singaporean origin, and Secretary Alvarez, it has as "stewards" NZ and Finland. The project involves an industrial pulp co-production and forest conservation in some 250,000 hectares of lands in Agusan. It is designed by Finland's world-famed consulting firm, the Yakko Poyny, which has earlier undertaken agroforestry in millions of hectares in Finland itself and in Brazil.

* * *

The project calls for at least $1 billion in investments. It will set up a kind of tree-cloning laboratory to provide the seedling bank for the massive reforestation in Agusan. A portion of that area would furnish Shannalyne with timber for export; included in its sunken costs here will be the dredging of the port of Nasipit in Carmen, Agusan del Norte, to allow entry of ocean-going vessels, while a railway system will link products and port. It should be stressed, said Alvarez, that trees grow in both NZ and Finland, both cold-climate countries, only for four months in the year, yet both are top timber and wood exporters. On the other hand, in RP, trees grow all of 365 days, but we import timber "mainly because we have ruined more than 10 million hectares of our forests through destructive and unsustainable logging."

In return, the project will generate employment for the people and revenues for the government. But more important is the resulting transfer technology from this state-of-the-art project. It will also provide a by-product called lignin, a chemical compound derived from wood during the manufacturing of paper. Lignin can be used as bio-mass fuel for the government's alternative fuels program. Alvarez noted that Finland derives 20 percent of its energy needs from lignin.

* * *

He recalled that the idea to revive this shelved project came from President Arroyo, who apparently never forgot it. At the launch of the "One Town, One Product" exhibit two months ago, as he ushered GMA to the Isabela booth, she said they should revive the project. "She seemed to just pull it out of a filing shelf in her mind," he recalled. Last month GMA asked him to join her working visit to Helsinki, and while everyone slept aboard the PAL 747, she worked on his memo on her laptop. She then ordered that the project's details be stitched together and that the parties involved be informed even as they were aloft. Shannalyne prexy Cheow flew to Helsinki and met with GMA on the last day of her extremely tight schedule, where she expressed her government's support for this NZ-Finland-backed project.

* * *

Four years ago, tomorrow, Oct. 6, Msgr. Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei, was canonized a saint by Pope John Paul II. That event was witnessed by one of the largest crowds ever assembled at the gigantic square in front of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. St. Josemaria is often called a saint for modern times as well as the saint of the working classes, for he taught that one need not go inside a convent or cloister in order to find sanctification. He taught that anyone can find it right in the middle of the world, where God put him, and that the key to one's sanctification is precisely his everyday work, if it's done as perfectly as possible, out of love for God. In over 60 countries around the world, that glorious event of Oct. 6 will be cherished by his spiritual sons and daughters.

Billboards from hell (2)

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THERE'S A "(2)" UP THERE BECAUSE I USED THE same title last year when the Anti-Billboard Coalition (ABC) whipped up a storm. Many storms have come and gone since that time and billboards have continued to collapse on highways, vehicles, transport systems, structures and human beings except on those who put them up.

Someone suggested I use the title "Death by billboard."

The man who instantly died after he was hit by a falling billboard was probably still being embalmed when this outdoor advertising executive said on national TV something like this: Milenyo was a strong typhoon and things standing were expected to fall, among them trees, electric posts and billboards. If we ban billboards, he said, we might as well ban trees and electric posts.

Ano raw? Trees aren't marijuana. You don't have to be a true-blue greenie to know the basics about trees. And electric posts? Many have contributed to the ugliness of the metropolis because of the entangled wires they weave around them, but they stand there for a purpose. And we expect our power providers to someday do away with unsightly wiring.

But the billboards? The mushrooming thousands of billboards on top of buildings, along roads and superhighways? And throw in the smaller ones that hang on lampposts, columns and street railings. What purpose do they serve?

I do believe in advertising but not in the use of billboards and hangings that litter the landscape. Sure, advertising adds to the vibrancy of the economy, and if well done, informs and educates consumers about product choices, it increases sales volume and helps lower prices, etc. As an industry, it also gives jobs to a lot of people. But it could go overboard in content and method, and become exploitative, offensive, destructive and dangerous.

The billboard overkill is an example. Now every outdoor ad agency and its clients want a piece of that wall, that roadside, that skyline, even the blue above.

I suspect that if billboards were banned altogether, manufacturers would be happy, equally happy. This would level the playing field, so to speak. Manufacturers, all of them, no longer need to spend for that kind of advertising. Hey, there's still print, TV, radio, word of mouth, events sponsorship, even charity and social advocacy.

We'd just have a handful of losers—those who invested their money in the uglification of the environment and those who work for them. But there is life down the road when it is all cleaned up just as there should be life after *jueteng*.

Edsa is not my regular route but when I drove through there a few days ago, I was aghast at how cluttered it has become. No more piece of blue sky in one's peripheral vision, just the darkening horizon. The whole beyond has been obstructed by rows upon rows of screaming ads that are not just there to be seen but to be read as well. Oh yes, I've caught myself reading some of those ads while driving. Careful, those billboards may not flip over but your vehicle might.

This brazen assault on your senses just blows your mind to billboard hell. How have we come to this?

Last year, I received a letter from a reader who complained that the letter M (which stands for Mary) on the Antipolo Marian Shrine has been obstructed by the giant M or twin arches of McDonald's. Well now, what do you say to the church officials who run the San Carlos and Guadalupe seminaries along Edsa who have allowed their haven of green (for the motorists' eyes) to be taken over by the advertisers? How many pieces of silver did they earn?

Billboards were once made of hand-painted metal sheets. Now they are made of plastic sheets that come out of giant printing machines. I once saw a team preparing to hoist up a billboard. The sheets flowed like a river and covered the whole sidewalk.

This reminded me of the European artist Kristo who covered entire structures with canvas and then had them photographed. He mummified entire landscapes for the duration of his outdoor exhibition. He was making a statement while the population watched in awe and puzzlement. Our advertising and billboard industries leave nothing for the imagination.

Someone should do a Kristo and use discarded tarpaulin from billboards and wrap an entire landscape. That would be a statement.

The issue now against billboards is not just their content. It is their proliferation. It is the inconsiderate, wanton, crude, rude desire to call attention and to sell. Manufacturers plaster giant pictures of their products everywhere. Cell phones, garments and accessories, food, health and beauty products, real estate, accessories, hardware. Just as guilty are the self-styled evangelists, politicians, movie promoters and TV stations.

The bucolic and beautiful landscapes in the provinces that beckon people home—it too is now groaning under the weight of billboards. We have become a billboard wasteland.

Once upon a time, billboards stood parallel to the highway. Now they are placed on a diagonal position or on a right angle to the road so that they can face, overwhelm and distract motorists.

The billboard disease has spread to the rest of society. Now, everybody just hangs or nails anything on an empty space. "*Tubero*," "room 4 rent," "lady bedspacer" and "*manghihilot*" announcements have been around for a long time, but now you have "Happy Fiesta" and "Congratulations graduates" from councilor so-and-so.

As of last year, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago already had two bills pending—Senate Bill 1714, the "Anti-Billboard Act" seeks to regulate the placement of billboard signs; and SB 1668 is "an act prohibiting officers from claiming credit through signage announcing a public works project."

Billboard advertising—big or small—should be banned altogether.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

'Konfrontasi'

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

THAT WAS THE TERM COINED BY ACHMED Sukarno for Indonesia's opposition to Malaysia in the late 1960s. In the West, this strategy is known as brinkmanship—"the policy or practice of pushing a dangerous situation to the brink of disaster in order to achieve the most advantageous outcome." This has been the administration strategy since July of last year. For success, *konfrontasi*—or brinkmanship—requires several things.

First, to be bold and unyielding. The best defense—as they say in sports—is a good offense. This brings us to the second requirement: To cross every line—whether formally or informally defined—as to what is acceptable political behavior, on the assumption that such a move will take opponents by surprise, and that their shock will sap their ability to make countermoves. Third, to abandon any pretense to enjoying popular support, but instead to mobilize and maintain the support of key classes and sectors—or keep them paralyzed by playing to their fundamental prejudices. Fourth, to identify an attractive objective which, if achieved, guarantees a self-perpetuating reward for those who've given their support thus far.

And so, for the first set of tactics, the administration refused every opportunity to vindicate itself, preferring absolute surrender on the part of its critics and, failing that, the liquidation of the bold and the intimidation of the rest through violence.

For the second set of tactics, it issued executive issuances whose scope would have been previously unthinkable; implemented them to an extent that defied past precedents; and peddled the comforting illusion that all this would come to pass on June 30, 2010 when the President's term shall have expired.

For the third set of tactics, it adopted the rhetoric of class warfare, and proclaimed itself the defender of the middle and professional classes while refraining, for now, from too boldly intruding into the business of big business; and it courted and maintained the support of officialdom and key officers in the armed forces.

And for the fourth set of tactics, the objective is a unicameral parliament as vaguely defined as possible, while maintaining as many options for the present chief executive as can be conceived, and paying lip-service to any other -ism (such as federalism or devolution) that may be attractive but which would be inconvenient to the task at hand.

You may ask, what is that task at hand? What is the strategy that employs these tactics?

Recently, American commentator Kieth Olbermann reminded his viewers in the United States of a passage from George Orwell's "1984." He meant it as an indictment of the Republican Party. It could serve just as well as an indictment of what's going on here at home.

Orwell wrote in Chapter 3: "The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power. Not wealth or luxury or long life or happiness: Only power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from all the oligarchies of the past, in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just round the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means, it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power."

Some columns ago, I pointed out that a great hope for change is that the old habits of obedience are disappearing. If encouraged, this offers us the hope that those used to being obeyed will have to earn future obedience; and that those who obeyed to the extent their lives became a dead end will now take it upon themselves to seek new solution to old problems.

A little later in the same chapter, Orwell writes what today's ruling party wants, if only it could find the words: "Obedience is not enough. Unless he is suffering, how can you be sure that he is obeying your will and not his own? Power is in inflicting pain and humiliation. Power is in tearing human minds to pieces and putting them together again in new shapes of your own choosing. Do you begin to see, then, what kind of world we are creating? It is the exact opposite of the stupid hedonistic Utopias that the old reformers imagined. A world of fear and treachery is torment, a world of trampling and being trampled upon, a world which will grow not less but more merciless as it refines itself. Progress in our world will be progress towards more pain. The old civilizations claimed that they were founded on love or justice. Ours is founded upon hatred. In our world there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph and self-abasement. Everything else we shall destroy. Already we are breaking down the habits of thought which have survived from before the Revolution."

Things such as the Ombudsman's decision and the manner in which constitutional amendments are being pursued suggest what a big gamble it all is. Even if the President's instructions given last week—"We mustn't have an election!"—are fulfilled, what does it buy, except time? And who has ever had the capacity to do anything but postpone the inevitable?

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Late bloomer

YOUNG BLOOD

Abigail Hinto

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHEN WE WERE TEENAGERS, MY SISTER AND I WOULD kid our mom that when she found herself in front of St. Peter at the gates of heaven and he asked her what she had done to develop our athletic abilities, she would be hard pressed to give an answer. That was the one fault that could be brought up against her.

But our mom was not entirely to blame. Neither my sister nor I expressed interest in sports when we were younger. But then we were never exposed to sports either. It was a chicken-or-egg thing. Looking back now, I'm beginning to wonder if I could have been good in sports even though all signs from early childhood pointed otherwise.

As a kid, I never liked playing *habulan* because I was always the first to be tagged and I could never tag a person after that. I could never jump over the Chinese garter from the shoulder level up. The closest I got to participating in sports was when I joined my Grade 4 class volleyball team, but it was only because I knew I wouldn't be called upon to play—I was just there to fill up the roster. In our sportsfest in high school, I would not sign up for any games but instead join the cheering squad. I was not in the jumping and flying group, but in the singing and shouting group. In college, I got a 2.75 in badminton and a 2.0 in aikido. I fared better in street jazz and social dance.

Then at the age of 26, I suddenly found myself learning, loving and doing well in a new game: Ultimate frisbee. It is a fast-running team sport, similar to basketball and football. Ultimate started to consume a big part of my life. From daily pick-up games at night, to month-long league games, to two-day international tournaments, I found myself fixing my calendar to fit all Ultimate-related activities. For four years running now, my life has been constantly occupied by Ultimate.

Though I never deluded myself into believing I am a top-tier player, I know I can hold my own against some of the best in the game sometimes. I can even play savage games (playing without substitution) as my team always lacks female players. Still, I know that I don't have the natural athletic ability (speed being my biggest weakness) that would make me a very good player.

Which makes me wonder: Could that have been developed when I was younger? But playing *habulan* was always a nightmare for me. Again, the chicken-or-egg thing.

Now that I am 29, I once again find myself learning a new sport and loving it. I have been a tennis fan since college and I followed the careers of Pete Sampras, Patrick Rafter and Martina Hingis, but I never seriously considered picking up the racket myself.

There was one summer in high school when my sister and I enrolled in tennis lessons. But nature had other plans and we both got chicken pox, pretty much ruining our entire summer.

Then for a very brief period in college, my friends and I would hit the tennis courts in our free time to try to get some exercise. But since none of us really knew how to play, it was more about picking up balls rather than hitting them, and so we stopped.

Recently, an opportunity presented itself again for me to take up tennis. And since my interest in the sport has been reignited with the emergence of the Spanish young gun, Rafael Nadal, and his exciting rivalry with the world's No. 1 player, Roger Federer, I became more eager to finally try to learn it.

Now, I'm hooked and consumed by it, playing three times a week, sometimes four, watching every tennis game on TV, and spending a lot of time on the Internet reading about it. I wish I had been exposed to it earlier. Like maybe when I was 4 so I could have had a chance of turning pro and then enjoying all the perks that go with it. Ha-ha.

But seriously, playing is a much healthier alternative than lounging on the couch and watching TV in my spare time, which I'm prone to do. Plus, I have discovered things about myself I never knew before. Like how self-aware I am of my capabilities and limitations: That I can push myself to keep trying and get better; that I can get out of my lazy bum on a Sunday morning, expose myself to the midday sun and heat or roll over mud and dirt for something I love to do; and that I like getting all sweaty.

I have come to realize that I love sports. I'm glad I got to discover this, even though I did so later rather than sooner. And trite as it may sound, it's better late than never.

Abigail Hinto, 29, is a graduate student in archeology at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Unwanted

"I was prime minister when I came, and I was jobless on the way back. I volunteered to work for the country, but if they don't want me to do that, I won't."

—Former Thailand Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra after his ouster by a coup d'etat

Divine mandate

"If you pursue Chairman Sabio's argument that he cannot be questioned in any legislative division or inquiries, (then) only God can question him. He can't be asked in a legislative, judicial or administrative investigation. He is only answerable to God."

—Sen. Franklin Drilon on Presidential Commission on Good Government Chair Camilo Sabio's "flawed" arguments before the Supreme Court

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EVERYTHING looks puny against the backdrop of even a fallen giant billboard PDI PHOTO

Monuments to man's folly

MAY I ADD MY VOICE TO PUBLIC calls for the dismantling of billboards and for a permanent ban on their installation not only along major roads in towns and cities, but also along highways all over the country.

It is only in the Philippines where giant billboards are allowed. Nowhere in Europe or in the North American continent have I seen such outrageous eyesores simultaneously spoiling the beauty of the landscape and posing danger to human life and limb.

I have yet to see the kind of billboards that you have there in the Philippines, here in Germany. German laws allow outdoor commercial advertisements (along roads) only on building walls. Some building owners lease their blank walls for outdoor advertising. And these ads are either painted or securely fixed on the walls. Outdoor ads here are never displayed on structures like you have back there.

Those "outdoor ad structures" out there could only be public hazards, with the natural windbreakers along the eastern parts of the country—from the island of Samar and Leyte in the Visayas to the Bicol peninsula upwards along the Sierra Madre mountains to the Cagayan Valley provinces (once virgin forests)—having been denuded.

I still remember that before I left the Philippines in 1980, when low pressure areas developed hundreds of kilometers east of Samar or Catanduanes, we would experience only cloudy days when they neared. When they finally turned into storms, they would batter Samar, Catanduanes and parts of the Bicol region—while we would experience only long days of intermittent rains as our share.

The then forested mountain ranges on Luzon's eastern front formed the main island's first line of defense against typhoons, thwarting their fierce fury and finally deflecting them upwards to the Batanes islands, leaving Southern Tagalog, Metro Manila and places west of the Sierra Madre unscatched.

Continued illegal logging in the country's natural shield has made it bare. Meanwhile, global warming, which is caused by man himself, has made typhoons in the Philippines and hurricanes in the Americas more ferocious and furious. And with the melting of polar ice, the water level has risen, and the flooding of the lower regions around the globe has become an annual occurrence now, even here in Germany.

The rise in world temperature has also caused widespread conflagrations in the forested regions of Australia, in parts of North America and in France, Portugal and Spain here in Europe.

As one of the more than six billion (and growing) inhabitants of this earth, each of us has an obligation to protect our environment, so that our children and their children's children will not inherit a bare and barren world where broken commercial and political billboard structures stand as reminders of man's folly and greed.

—RAMON A.MAYUGA,
GeRMayuga@aol.com

Freedom of conscience

I DISAGREE WITH RAUL PANGALANGAN's "Church-State separation in the Diliman Republic" (PDI, 9/15/06) for a number of reasons. First of all, I differ with his idea of separation of Church and State. For some people, separation of Church and State means that the state has nothing to do with religion and vice versa. For me, I believe that separation means two things: (1) that the State should not be supported by people of various religions; (2) that the State should have no official state religion. The government should not use public money for the support of any religion because it should treat all religions equally and with fairness.

Secondly, separation of Church and State means that all religions are equal before the law. No preferential treatment for one religion should be done by the State. For instance, no form of prayer should be used as the official prayer. Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and all the rest who believe in God do not pray in the same way, although all of them believe that prayer is important. Thus, no standard form of liturgy should be used in public schools. Each one should be free to pray in his own way.

Moreover, we should remember that the taxes that support the State come from people of different faiths, including those of no faith. That is why public funds cannot be spent for the benefit of one religion alone. Yet, I have seen public or government offices—from city halls on to Malacañang—where images of the Virgin Mary, Sto. Niño or some other saints are publicly displayed. Is this not a violation of the separation principle, considering that other religions are not given the same privilege?

How was the separation principle arrived at? It seems that this principle was laid down because the puritans were being persecuted by the Church of England. When these brave pioneers of religious freedom came to the United States, they wrote into their constitution a provision banning any religious denomination from interfering with the freedom of conscience. The Filipino revolutionaries also incorporated the separation principle in the Malolos Constitution, doubtless because of their bitter experience with the friars and the colonial government.

May we cherish our religious freedom, and like Thomas Jefferson, vow before the altar of God, eternal hostility to any form of tyranny over the minds of men. Only then can we realize the full import of that much-abused phrase "separation of Church and State."

—REV. SALVADOR D. EDUARTE,
retired minister,
United Church of Christ,
San Nicolas, Pangasinan

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Indigenous trees along highways

TYPHOON MILENYO FELLED A lot of trees and severed power lines in many places of Metro Manila. As of this writing, some parts of the city are still without power. The economic costs may run up to billions of pesos.

While we need trees in the metropolis, we could have avoided much of the damage if we planted the right trees along roads. Many of the easily felled or uprooted trees were "introduced species" like acacias, gmelinas, mahoganies and fire trees, meaning, these are not native trees.

A day after the typhoon, I went around Metro Manila and I noticed that many of the trees that were left standing and suffered minimal damage were native trees, like narra, dao, cupang and bagras.

We tend to plant introduced trees since they usually grow faster than the native species. However, indigenous trees have co-evolved with the Philippine climate and typhoons and tend to root well, unlike many introduced trees. Perhaps, we should promote the planting of these trees along our roads.

Not only do they attract biodiversity, such as native birds; they are suited to the climate and also provide shade. As the introduced trees are usually more aesthetically pleasing, they should be planted in areas such as parks and away from installations and structures, where they pose less of a risk to life and property.

—DR. BENJAMIN VALLEJO JR.,
assistant professor,
Institute of Environmental Science and Meteorology,
Villadolid Hall, College of Science,
University of the Philippines,
Diliman, Quezon City

Insensitive OAAP member

CARLO LLAVE, CHAIR OF OUTdoor Advertisers' Association of the Philippines (OAAP) said that less than 40 of the 2,500 billboards in Metro Manila crashed down at the height of typhoon Milenyo. This is still a "good percentage," he said.

Llave's remark just shows the advertisers' greed and their blatant disregard for public safety. Any one of OAAP's member, who might have been passing underneath any of those billboards at the time they fell, could have lost his or her life.

Llave believed that Milenyo's winds could have gusted up to as much as 220 kph on the average. I did not know advertisers in the Philippines are also meteorologists.

—EDWARD ANOSAN,
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No link with Osama bin Laden

THIS IS IN REACTION TO RAmon Tulfo's column titled "Bin Laden and I have crossed paths." (PDI, 9/30/06)

For a long time, Tulfo has been using his column to malign me. His allegations against me have bordered on the baseless, the malicious and the absurd.

Tulfo has again linked me to Osama bin Laden on the basis of what he has been told by my estranged wife. He also claimed that he had met Bin Laden during the inauguration of the Al Farouq Institute in Palawan in 1994. These allegations made me realize that his attacks against me had graduated from just being absurd to plain stupid.

I would like to make a categorical denial of any meeting, association or link with Bin Laden. I have never met him, much less entertained him in my house in Makati at any time in the past. Such a story is simply incredible even to the most gullible persons in the country.

In addition, I am not aware of any intelligence report of Bin Laden holding meetings in the heart of the country's capital or in the province of Palawan. Tulfo's Sept. 30 column is therefore unfair not only to me but also to the innocent people who, he said, have had direct contact with Bin Laden.

I could not imagine how Tulfo could stoop so low just to destroy my reputation, how he could allow himself to be used by people whose sole purpose is to ruin my good name and destroy everything that I have worked for.

The cases involving my wife and myself are already being heard by the courts for proper disposition. As a law-abiding person, I believe that it is where our disputes must be heard and resolved through the application of Philippine laws, and not in the media through malicious and insane imputations of wrongdoings and shady associations.

I am hopeful that Tulfo bears this in mind if he is indeed the righteous and fair-minded journalist that he projects himself to be.

—FOUZI ALI BONDAGJY,
3/F 6797 Ayala Avenue,
Makati City

Tan got wrong impression on US model for education

ACCORDING TO MICHAEL TAN we've basically adopted an American model for education, allowing both public and private sectors to operate with almost a distinct preference for the latter." (PDI, 9/29/06)

How can Tan always get America wrong? Every state in America has its own university. Some of them operate large networks of colleges and universities. Some cities also have their own public universities. In many areas, junior and community colleges provide a bridge between high school and four-year college courses for students.

In junior colleges, students can generally complete their first two years of college at low cost and remain close to home. Public colleges and universities usually charge tuition. However, the amount is often much lower than that charged by private institutions, which do not receive the same level of public support. Many students attend college, public or private, with the benefit of federal loans. These loans must be repaid after graduation.

The United States does not have a national school system. But the government provides guidance and funding for federal educational programs in which both public and private schools take part.

—AMADEO DELA CRUZ,
amadeodelacruz@gmail.com

How to live against doctors' advice

HIGH BLOOD

Marcial R. Pimentel

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

AS A YOUNG MAN, I WAS SICKly and would easily catch a cold and be stricken with fever. There was reasonable ground to believe that I would not live beyond 50.

Two years following the outbreak of World War II, my father decided to evacuate to Lucena where we had a good number of blood-relatives. Before long, I had ingratiated myself to new friends and *barkadas*. When the Japanese occupiers became more suspicious that the young men in our community were helping the resistance, a few of us decided to travel by sea to Bondoc Peninsula and join the guerrillas of Gen. Gaudencio Vera.

Before that, a drizzle would send me to bed with a fever. It was amazing, however, that while in the guerilla movement, out in the forests, heavy rains, which caught us in not a few instances, did not adversely affect my health at all. And we were not even getting enough nourishment then.

Thirty years and eight children later, I was alive and kicking in the country's political arena—as a town mayor of Daet, governor and assemblyman of the Bicol region. For a sickly man, that was a thoroughly taxing journey through life.

At age 70, I was still around but I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. I had a difficult time urinating and defecating. I bled when I did the latter. This is it, I thought.

I went through radiation for three or four months. Until now, I am still taking some pills prescribed by my doctor because of that ailment.

When I hit the age of 80, I was amazed to find myself waking up each morning. Thereupon, I became ambitious. I marked 84 as my age of departure.

But lo and behold, I celebrated my 85th birthday anniversary last July. Right now I am experiencing some dizzy spells. For instance, if I dropped a hundred-peso bill, it would be better for me to leave it to the lucky finder than pick it up myself. But if it is a thousand pesos, I'd rather be dizzy.

Doctors advise me that if I want to live longer, I should do this and not do that. However, my desire is not to live longer but rather to enjoy the remaining days of my life.

Against my doctors' advice, I keep on eating *adobo* and smoking a pack of cigarettes each day. However, I do not take an extra bite the moment I feel I have had enough. Most important of all, I put aside depressing and unpleasant thoughts while eating. Otherwise, I'd lose my appetite. I have a flair for telling jokes. A good laugh makes my day. Indeed, laughter is a truly healthy exercise.

At present, there are three activities I enjoy the most: eating, smoking and sleeping—if we could classify sleeping as an activity. Of course, I walk 20 minutes each day.

Am I scared of death? **No.** If I knew that I would die and others would not, then I have every reason to be terrified.

In my assessment, I deem myself to be a good man and I am confident that I will pass the test above. I do not cheat people. I have a special compassion for the poor—not because of my desire to go to heaven or of my fear of going to hell. I simply feel joy each time I realize that I have made a poor man happy. His smile touches my heart and makes me smile, too.

Do I know that there is a second life? Honestly, I don't know!

Marcial R. Pimentel is a retired politician.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Typhoon can't tear apart this family

By Joanna Los Baños
Legazpi City

FOR 15-YEAR-OLD JOSEPH Pulgosino, who lives in the coastal Barangay Baybay in Legazpi City, recovering from Typhoon "Milenyo," which battered the capital last week, has been very difficult.

His house was among the 13,978 destroyed by the typhoon in Albay, according to a report of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

"I don't know what to do anymore," he said, teary-eyed as he pounded on a metal scrap he was going to sell to a nearby junk shop. He said he earned P10 for every kilo of plastic or metal piece he brought.

The money, he said, helped buy food for his family.

While other teenagers were busy walking around the village and doing other things, Pulgosino was working doubly hard, hoping to earn enough to buy materials to rebuild their house.

His mother does laundry work in the nearby Victory Village, and her income is not regular. His father had left them when he was only six years old.

Although he has an older sister who helps them, Pulgosino said his mother depended much on him. His sister lives in another town and does not earn much.

Tragedy strikes

Pulgosino recounted the tragedy. At 4 p.m. on Sept. 27, at the height of Milenyo in his village, the family left the house and sought shelter at the Legazpi Port Elementary School, bringing only six pieces of clothes for him, his mother and his younger brother. He had thought that the typhoon would soon be over and they would be able to go home the next morning.

After the long night, they returned to Baybay.

"We were shocked to see our house gone," he said. "It was washed away by the sea."

Now gazing at the sea, he said: "I hope we can fix our house soon."

His grandmother, Salvacion Altiche, 76, whose house was also damaged, said she and other family members were spending the night at the evacuation center. They leave in the morning because they did not want to disturb the classes, she said.

"We try to look for our things and fix our house in the morning and then go back to the evacuation center at night," she said.

They were reconstructing their house with whatever they retrieve from the piles of wood scattered on the shore.

The old woman complained that she easily got tired. "If I could not help it, I sneak into this roof and take a nap there," she said, pointing at the fallen concrete roof of the barangay hall.

"I pity my grandchildren because they are not able to go to school," she said, referring to Pulgosino and his brother. The boys were not able to save their school uniforms and things.

Pulgosino is a third year student at the Banquerohan Extension High School, while his brother is a first year student.

Altiche said it was not the first time that her house was destroyed by a typhoon. "In May, my house was also destroyed by Typhoon 'Caloy.'"

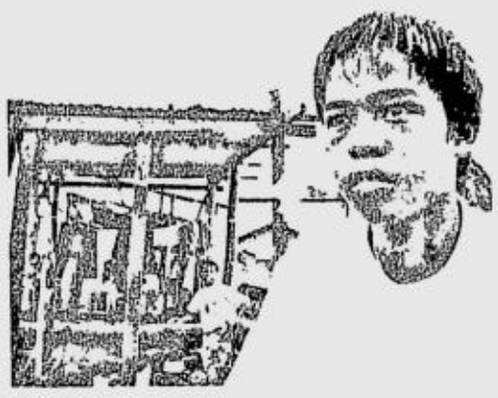
The house was rebuilt through the help of the city government, which gave P2,500 in assistance, she said.

On Tuesday, Mayor Noel Rosal said the city would give money for the construction of houses as soon as it has the funds.

"*Ubos-ubos pa ang pera ngayon* (We have no money right now)," he said, pointing out that the city had already spent a huge amount for people who evacuated from Mt. Mayon's eruptions.

Altiche said that if it was possible, she, along with her family, would relocate. "But the problem is, where to get the money for the construction of our new houses."

Even if they did not know how they would cope with the disaster, Pulgosino knew what he wanted. "What is important is my family is together. All of us are alive and we will always be there to help each other even if another storm comes."



FIFTEEN-year-old Joseph Pulgosino of Barangay Baybay in Legazpi City hopes he could immediately rebuild their house destroyed by Typhoon Milenyo.
NIÑO ORBETA / INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Islanders conserve the Philippine teak

By Madonna T. Virola
Ilin Island, Occidental Mindoro

ILIN ISLAND, ABOUT AN HOUR-long boat trip from the port area of Barangay Caminawit in San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, is home to the endangered Philippine teak (*Tectona philippinensis*).

Wood from the tree species has been widely known to be good for lumber, furniture, firewood and charcoal—a compelling reason for islanders to raise concern and join efforts to preserve the natural resource.

The Philippine teak, which locals call *malabayabas*, comes from the *Verbenaceae* family. "Before, we called it *bagunglati*," said Inocencio Fabular, 67.

Logging, charcoal-making and habitat destruction have threatened the wood species.

The Mindoro Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc. (MBCFI) inaugurated a nursery for the Philippine teak in Sitio Bunlao, Barangay Ipil, on Sept. 23.

The nursery is part of a project which started in June and sustained for 15 months through a grant from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Food and Rural Affairs and the Flora and Fauna International.

Activities include community organizing, consciousness-raising, nursery, forest restoration and establishment of a cooperative.

Project manager Dr. Emelina Mandia, a professor of De La Salle University who hails from Mindoro, was overwhelmed by the presence of almost all of the barangay leaders of the island during the inauguration.

The guests included San Jose Mayor Romulo Festin, Vice Mayor Toto Agustin, American philanthropist Joseph Reynolds, faculty members and students of the Ilin National High School.

At least 50,000 Philippine teak seedlings are expected to have been planted by May next year. Rotaracters (youth volunteers) cleaned plastic cups that were used as seedling containers.

MADONNA T. VIROLA

A GIRL holds a seedling of Philippine teak during a tree planting last month.

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BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE 1904 PHILIPPINES

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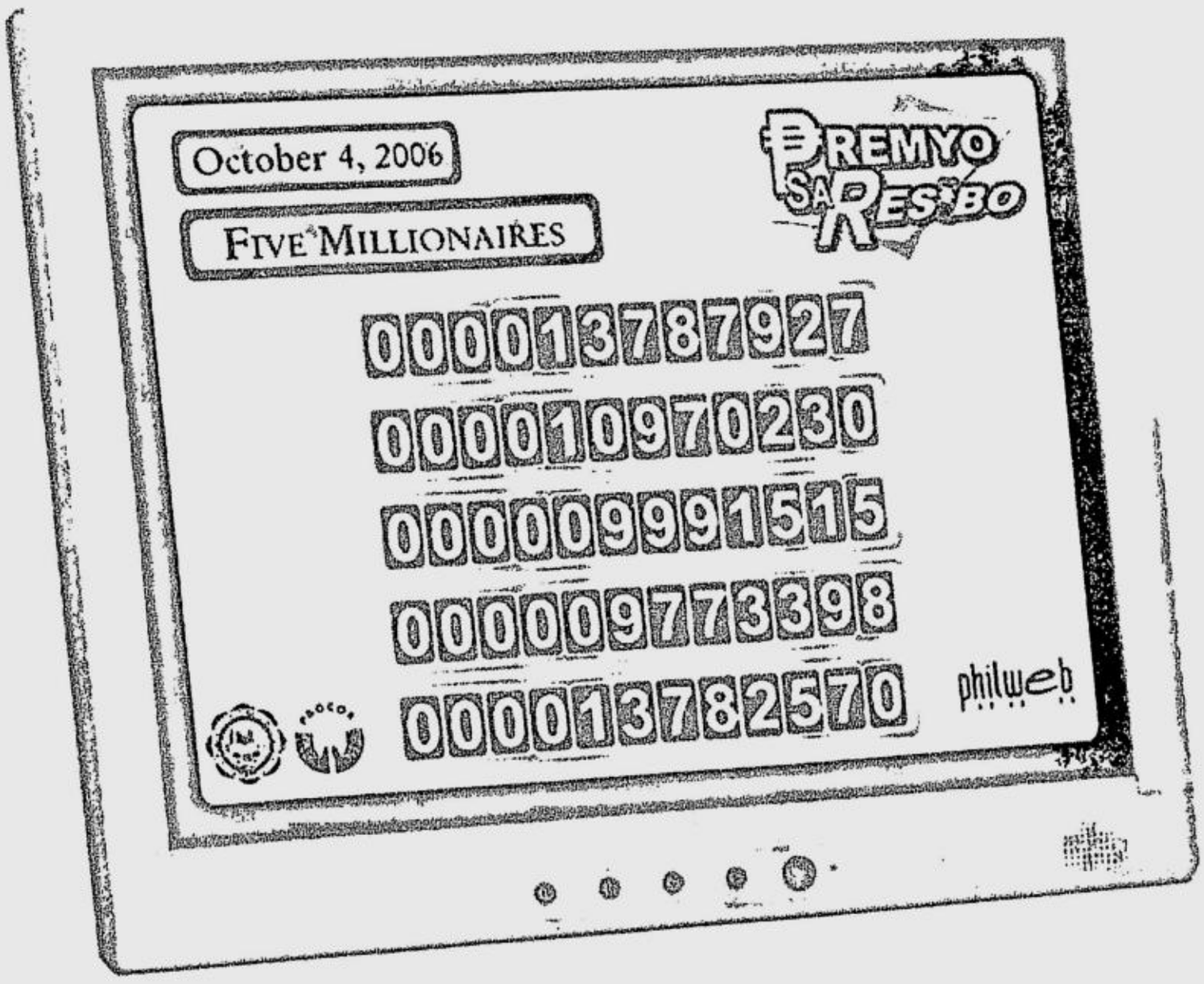

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Ecija villagers pick up fight vs rebs

By Anselmo Roque
Inquirer Central Luzon

SAN JOSE CITY—VILLAGES IN THIS CITY HAVE become virtual "war zones" as residents started picking up the fight against communist insurgents and criminals.

A number of outposts, some with elevated sentry boxes, dot each village. The 20-square meter outposts are made of bamboo and cogon and fortified by sandbags.

Some villages have as many as 11 outposts as each of the *purok* (zones) in every barangay opted to put up its own.

Groups of men in the villages take turns in manning the outposts 24 hours a day.

They do not carry firearms but are given authority to guard their villages through the implicit approval by residents to implement whatever is deemed appropriate to maintain peace and order in their communities.

The groups, according to Lt. Col. Joselito Kakilala, commander of the Army's 48th Infantry Battalion based here, operate under the barangay defense system (BDS).

"The officers of these BDS decided to put up the outposts and to carry out whatever they deemed right to maintain peace and order in their respective areas," Kakilala said.

He said what is happening here is "bayanihan" (community spirit and cooperation) at work to defend residents and maintain the community's peace.

"We briefed them about the situation here and provided them insights on what will happen positively if they act on their own," Kakilala said.

Alfredo Escudero, president of the city's Association of Barangay Captains, said the BDS in each *purok* is kept alive by volunteerism.

He said male residents between 15 and 60 years old volunteer and form groups to man the outpost and to respond to various complaints that would disturb the community. Some residents contribute money to buy coffee for the volunteers.

"*Pati away po ng mag-asawa dinadala na rin at nilulutas sa* outpost (Even fights between couples are taken and resolved in the outpost)," Escudero told the INQUIRER.

He said volunteers check all vehicles coming in and out of their *purok*. They also ask visitors to register and indicate whom to visit in a logbook at the outpost.

"It's a big help for our barangay officials. Residents now strictly follow rules, like the observance of curfew hours. Even those who used to take illegal drugs came forward and volunteered, as if to atone for their sins," Escudero said.

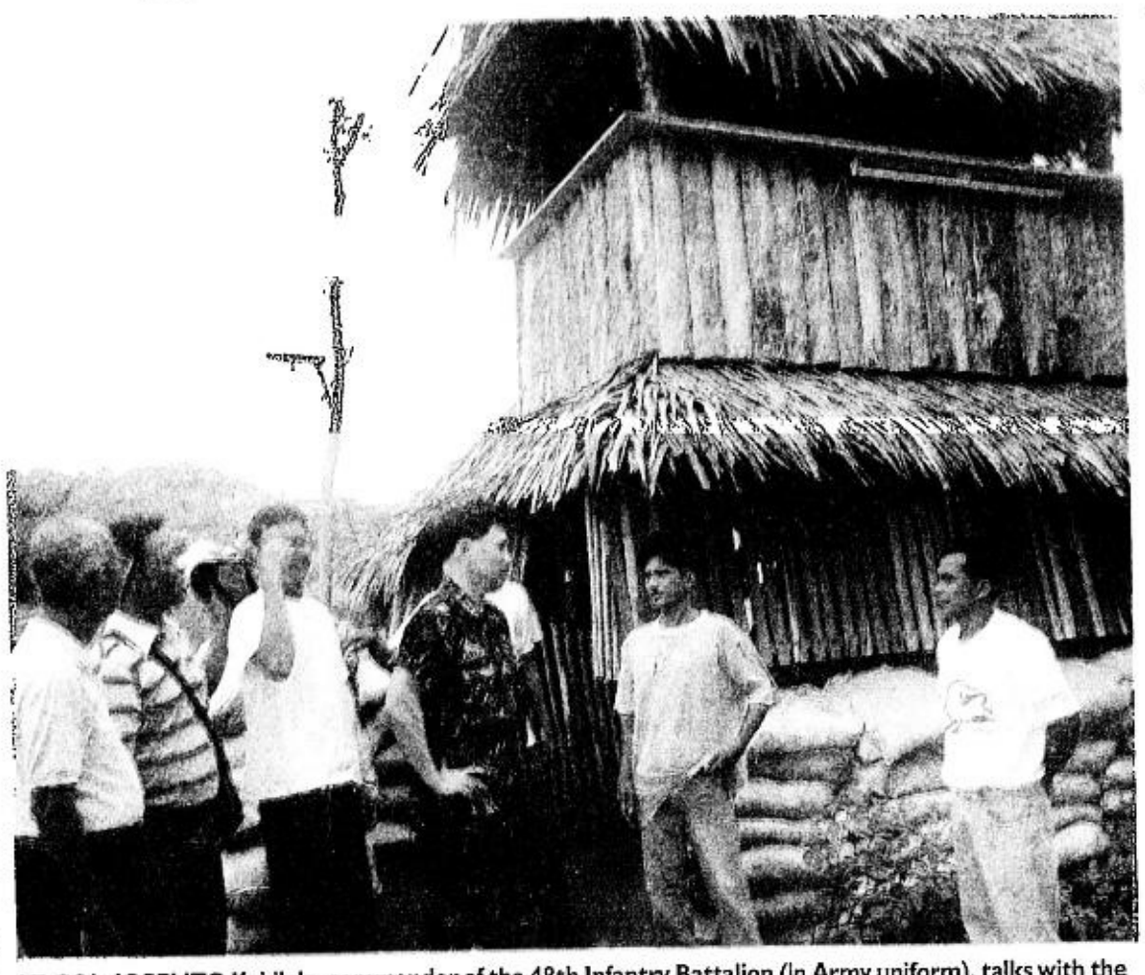
Mayor Alex Belena said crime rate in the city has gone down to "almost zero level."

"We have no more reports of cattle rustling, holdup, robbery and theft even of chicken and other animals, which used to be common during the lean months (usually after planting, when residents in agricultural communities have no money as they wait for harvest)," he said.

Belena said police reports sent to his office noted that even violent fights prompted by drunkenness are no longer happening due to the presence of the outposts.

The mayor also said the New People's Army's collection of revolutionary taxes from businessmen "appeared to have stopped."

Kakilala, in earlier reports, said the revolutionary taxes collected by rebels among local businessmen in the past reached P2.9 million every six months.



LT. COL. JOSELITO Kakilala, commander of the 48th Infantry Battalion (in Army uniform), talks with the sentries in one of the outposts now dotting the different *puroks* or zones of San Jose City.
ANSELMO ROQUE/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Another rape in Subic, by Korean on Filipina cook

By Ansbert Joaquin
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—ANOther rape happened in Subic, this time involving a Korean boat captain who reportedly assaulted a 23-year-old Filipina cook working in his vessel, the Olongapo City police said.

The police said the woman, a resident of Olongapo City, reported a complaint for sexual molestation against Young Sil Yoon, master captain of a barge of Hanjin Heavy Industries Corp. Phils.

Hanjin is the largest foreign investor to enter the Philippines this year with a committed investment of $1 billion.

It is building the fourth largest ship building facility in the world in the Redondo Peninsula inside this freeport and plans to employ about 30,000 direct and indirect skilled workers when the shipyard is fully operational.

Police records showed that the alleged rape happened on Sept. 29 inside the cabin of a barge on Subic Bay.

The woman told investigators that Young watched a pornographic film before she was raped.

A source to whom the victim reported the incident gave the INQUIRER details of the alleged rape. He, however, asked not to be named as he is working inside the Subic Bay Freeport.

He said on the night of Sept. 28, the woman called a friend asking where she would sleep for the night. The woman was quoted as complaining to her friend that Young was forcing her to sleep in the room of a certain Mr. Kim, another Korean.

The friend advised the woman to leave the barge and proceed to the Hanjin compound where she could find a place to sleep. But the woman said she was not allowed to leave.

At about 9 a.m. the following day, the woman said Young asked her to prepare coffee and cold water and told her to bring these inside his room.

While inside the room, Young supposedly played a pornographic film in his computer and asked the woman to watch it.

The woman, according to the source, turned her back against the screen. She then asked Young to allow her to leave but the Korean stopped her.

Later, the woman said Young started caressing and kissing her. The Korean forcibly undressed her and started raping her.

The woman, however, said she was able to free herself by kicking Young. She ran to an adjacent room where she got dressed.

The source said the woman also narrated the incident to another friend, a woman, who accompanied her to the police.

The source said the woman's friend approached officials at Hanjin to report the assault but she was ignored.

On Oct. 2, a representative of the Intelligence and Investigation Office (IIO) of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority fetched the victim and her friend and took them to the SBMA IIO where they gave the details of the assault.

Tar balls emerging to be worse health threats from oil spill

By Hazel P. Villa
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THESE HARD OR hardening black patches of bunker fuel oil called tar balls on the shorelines of Guimaras are turning out to be just as toxic to human health as freshly spilled oil.

The tar balls, also called weathered oil, is composed of hard to degrade oil residue such as asphaltenes and resins which produce noxious fumes dangerous to human health, according to Mary Aidine M. Galvan, microbiologist of the Philippine Reef and Rainforest Conservation Foundation Inc.

Asphaltenes are molecular substances that are found in crude oil, along with resins, aromatics, and saturates.

"Tar balls are recalcitrant (hard to degrade) and stay longer in the environment. The tar balls produce hydrogen sulfide and noxious gases such as methane that are in turn the product of anaerobic breakdown," said Galvan.

When she started studies on bioremediation in oil spill-affected Inampulugan Island on Sept. 11, Galvan said she was shocked to see that oil has seeped into the white sands of the beach on which President Macapagal-Arroyo walked when she visited Guimaras for the second time on Aug. 28 after the Petron spill on Aug. 11.

Galvan said the oil that has seeped into the sand returns to the surface during sunny weather, and as such, there is no such thing as a total cleanup of spill-affected areas where oil has mixed with sand.

"Methane gas binds with hemoglobin and competes with the oxygen binding capacity of a person's blood, resulting to hypoxia and anoxia that may result to sickness or death," said Galvan, a member of the Marine Section of the Society of Conservation Biology of the United States.

Anoxia is a condition in which there is an absence of oxygen supply to an organ's tissues although there is adequate blood flow to the tissue while hypoxia is a condition in which there is a decrease of oxygen to the tissue in spite of adequate blood flow to the tissue, said the US National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

The Institute said that in severe cases of anoxia and hypoxia, the patient is often comatose for periods ranging from hours to days, weeks, or months. Seizures, muscle spasms or twitches, and neck stiffness may occur, it added. Susceptible to sickness related to the toxic fumes from bunker fuel oil are the elderly, children, asthmatics and those with respiratory ailments, said Galvan.

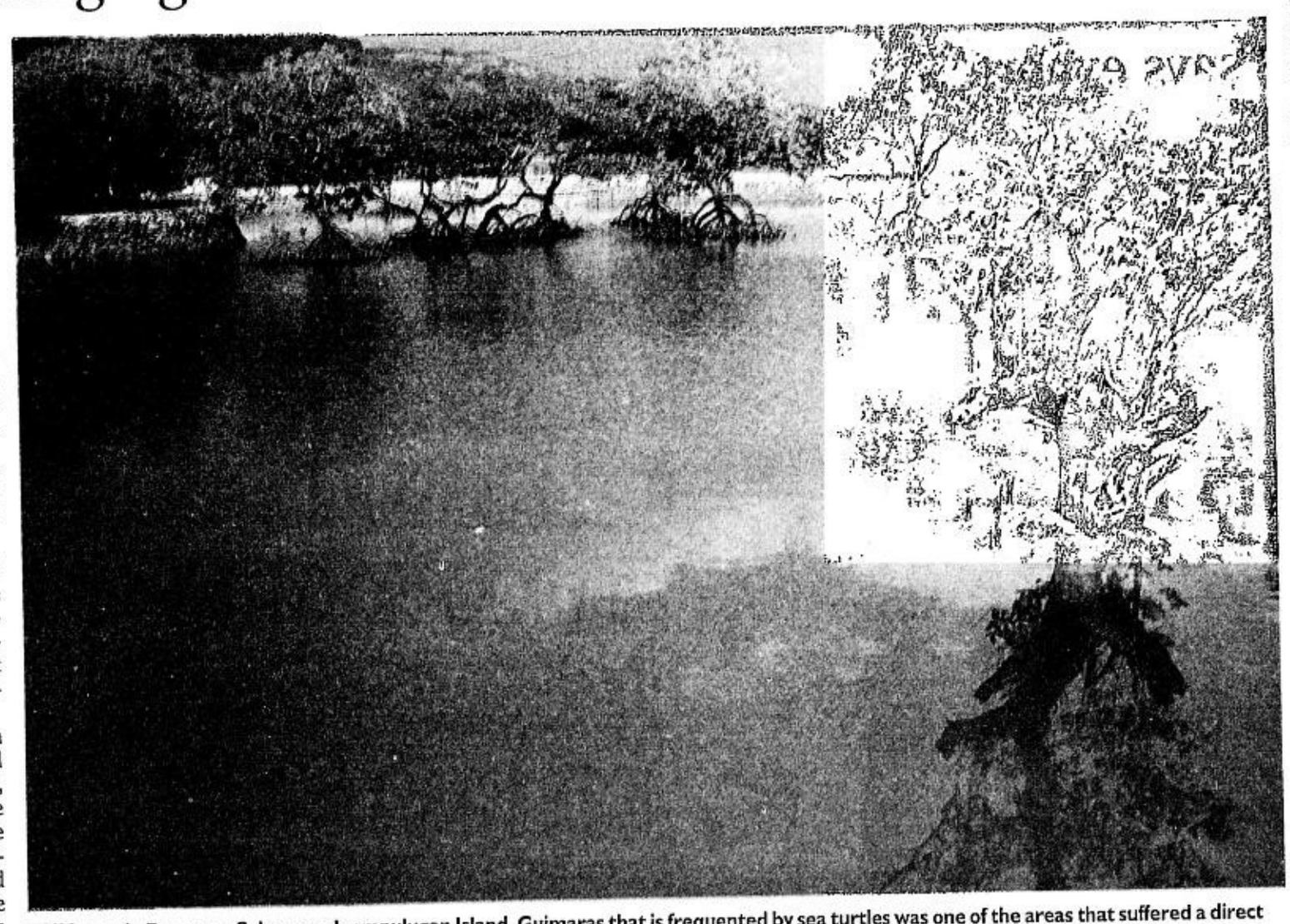
Three deaths have been reported since Aug. 11 but the Department of Health said it has yet to confirm that such deaths are directly related to the oil spill.

The spilled bunker fuel oil that contaminated the island-province is categorized as residual fuel oils or heavy fuel oils loaded with toxic chemicals.

The National Disaster Coordinating Council, in its latest situation update on the oil spill dated Sept. 22, has quoted the DOH's report that respiratory illness "remains to be the main symptoms, representing 57.09 percent out of 1,706 cumulative total of signs and symptoms."

From Aug. 28 to Sept. 19, 2006, 921 consultations were made in 15 barangays in Guimaras and 295 patients or 32 percent were involved in cleanup operations, said the NDCC.

The same NDCC report stated that a 2-year-old girl and a 7-year-old boy were confined at the Guimaras Provincial Hospital for bronchopneumonia and chemical pneumonitis. The report did not give details.



THIS area in Barangay Sabang on Inampulugan Island, Guimaras that is frequented by sea turtles was one of the areas that suffered a direct hit from the Petron oil spill of Aug. 11. A sea turtle was recently found dead in the area.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Volcanologists lower Mayon alert level to 2 but danger zone stays

LEGAZPI CITY—VOLCANOLOgists lowered Mayon volcano's alert level status from 3 to 2 and said there was now a remote possibility of a violent eruption.

Alex Baloloy, science research specialist of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), said they lowered Mayon's alert level 4 p.m. on Tuesday because of the "continuous decline in its overall activity."

In the Phivolcs update, it said all key parameters, such as earthquake levels, ground deformation and gas outputs, showed a decline in activity and that the Ligñon Hill observatory also reported that the flow of lava had stopped since Oct. 1.

"The persistent decline on all the monitored parameters (seismic, ground deformation, sulfur dioxide emission rate, visuals) and the apparent cessation of lava extrusion are indications that the volcano is relatively stable and slowly heading toward normal conditions," it said.

Even if the alert level status was lowered, there was still continuing threat from sudden explosions, rockfalls from the upper slopes and secondary pyroclastic flows as a result of the collapse of the newly deposited lava at the upper and middle slopes.

The Phivolcs reminded the public not to enter the six-kilometer permanent danger zone and the 7-km extended danger zone at the southeast sector of the volcano.

On July 14, Mayon suddenly spewed trickles of lava, prompting the Phivolcs to raise to 3 the alert level around the volcano.

Phivolcs said lava fragments were being detached from a lava pile on the summit crater, causing a glow seen from this city and its vicinity.

Later, because of the continuous lava emission, the Phivolcs reported that the lava trail was the longest in 30 years.

On Aug. 7, Eduardo Laguerta, Phivolcs resident volcanologist, said Phivolcs raised the alert level to 4, which meant that a "hazardous, explosive eruption" was imminent.

More than 40,000 residents living at the 6-km PDZ and the 8-km EDZ at the southeast section of the volcano were asked to evacuate in the different evacuation centers in Legazpi City, Tabaco City, Ligao City and the towns of Daraga, Guinobatan, Camalig, Sto. Domingo and Malilipot.

They stayed at the evacuation centers for more than a month and were finally able to go home when the alert level status of the volcano was lowered to 3 on Sept. 11.

The most destructive eruption of Mayon occurred on Feb. 1, 1814, where 1,200 people died.

Joanna Los Baños, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Findings bare no basis for takeover of Poro Pt. port

DAGUPAN CITY—CLAIMING that it has not violated any environmental law, the Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC) said on Wednesday the Department of Environment and Natural Resources has no basis in stopping the firm from operating the Poro seaport in San Fernando City.

PPIC counsel Brigido Dulay issued the statement after a DENR environmental management staff completed its investigation of the violations allegedly committed by the firm in operating the seaport.

A report on the investigation was submitted to Joel Salvador, Environmental Management Bureau regional director, before the Aug. 5 takeover of the seaport by the Philippine Ports Authority, allegedly at the behest of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

Quoting the report, Dulay said "no spillages of coal materials were observed within the area of PPIC" and that "only traces of coal materials were found around and at the loading area of the PPIC."

Somebody else's trash

The report said the stockpile of coal materials found was owned by Saturn Marketing Corp., a locator at the seaport, and not by PPIC.

It also said that the water discharged by ships docking at the port was not waste water but ballast water used to balance the ships while sailing.

Salvador, reached through his mobile phone, refused to talk about the issue, saying that the case was pending in court.

But a staff member who prepared the report confirmed the findings, adding that the inspection was conducted to verify the alleged 14 violations of PPIC as contained in a report of San Fernando City's mega multipartite monitoring team.

PPIC contended that it was not a locator but a joint venture partner of BCDA and was thus covered by the ECC issued to the authority.

Salvador said in earlier interviews that if PPIC was covered by BCDA's ECC, the company should not have paid the penalty when it was informed of its alleged violations.

No imminent danger

Dulay questioned the issuance of the CDO, which, he said, should only be issued when there was an imminent environmental disaster.

"This was not the case with Poro Point. The fact that the CDO was signed on July 25 and issued only on Aug. 4 was evidence that there was no imminent danger to the environment," he said.

Dulay said the DENR report clearing the PPIC of any major environmental violation "raises more questions as to why the BCDA resorted to an armed takeover of the Poro seaport."

"General (Narciso) Abaya (BCDA president) was relying on the CDO to justify the use of force. Now that more doubts are being raised on the legality and validity of the CDO, we wonder what his true motives are in expelling the PPIC from Poro Point," he said.

Dulay said the report of the DENR staff debunked "myths that the armed assault on the Poro Point seaport and bulk terminal was based on alleged environmental issues." *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

ILOILO RIVER TRAGEDY

Jeep passengers held on to prayers

IGBARAS, ILOILO—ON THE brink of death, passengers of a jeep that fell into a rampaging river called on the names of those they believed they needed at that crucial hour—God's and their loved ones'.

Maricor Lumbres, 35, called on her husband, Ulysses, who stood by the river bank helplessly watching his wife get carried by the current.

"*Ga, buligi ko, buligi ko*! (Love, help me, help me)," Maricor recalled herself shouting as the strong current carried her downstream.

Then she shouted, "Lord, help us."

Her prayer was answered when she was able to get out of the jeep that fell into the Tangyan River.

Other passengers of the jeep tried to keep afloat by hanging on to anything they could get their hands on.

Maricor found a floating tire and held on to it tightly with a hand, using her other hand to maneuver in the water. She was plucked out about 2 km from where the jeep fell.

Many others lost their lives. Her uncle Alfredo Ebanag Jr., 60, and aunt Concepcion Embalsado, are still missing with 17 others.

Twenty two passengers, including two children, died. Twenty four persons survived.

Like most of the victims, Maricor and husband Ulysses were on their way home to Barangay Lab-on after attending the funeral of retired teacher Remo Eguico at the municipal cemetery in the town proper.

RELATIVES of passengers of a jeep that fell into the Tangyan River visit their loved ones at the Gigato Funeral Parlor in Igbaras, Iloilo. ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

They rode a motorcycle but Maricor later decided to transfer to the jeep at the foot of a bridge that was starting to disappear in a pool of water overflowing from the river.

The jeep was packed with passengers, some of them taking seats on the vehicle's roof. Maricor found a seat in the jeep's rear. Her husband didn't take the ride.

Halfway through the bridge in Sitio Songsongon in Barangay Barasan, the jeep's engine conked out.

Driver Margarito Edang restarted the engine but the strong current dragged the jeep into the river. It overturned several times.

Passengers were strewn into the water while those inside struggled to get out.

"*Daw mga basura kami nga gintapok sa tubig* (We were like garbage thrown into the water)," Maricor told the INQUIRER.

Maricor, who was interviewed at the town's rural health center where all the survivors were brought, said there were around 50 to 60 passengers in the jeep, including at least 15 on the roof. Many passengers sat on the laps of their relatives, she said.

Romelie Elmaguin, 44, a farmer from Barangay Bagay in Igbaras, said he was inside the jeep when he felt it being dragged to the river.

"I held on the hand railing with all my strength as the jeep fell and overturned," said Elmaguin.

He managed to get out and was rescued an hour later around 200 meters from where the jeep fell.

"I prayed to God that he will not abandon me," said Elmaguin who had bruises and cuts all over his body.

Jonel Eluso, 36, a resident of Barangay Corocuan was on the roof of the jeep with 10 to 15 others when the vehicle fell into the water.

He jumped into the water as the jeep started sinking deeper and started to swim to the riverbank but the current was too strong.

"I was repeatedly slammed by the water against rocks and I had difficulty breathing," he said.

He held on to a large vine and root of a tree and managed to pull himself out of the water.

His 63-year-old father, Antonio, also survived but his mother Josefina, 62, is still missing.

"I thought it was my last day to live," said Eluso. *Nestor Burgos Jr., Inquirer Visayas*

Landslides in Makiling no surprise, says expert

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—THE landslides in Mt. Makiling attributed to Typhoon "Milenyo" were a natural occurrence, said Dr. Portia Lapitan, director of the Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems.

She said the landslides, that killed 14 people in Los Baños, were caused by the abnormal volume of water and intensity of the wind brought by the typhoon.

Based on the assessment report of what had happened in Mt. Makiling, the rainfall reached 308 millimeters, far from the average rainfall in Mt. Makiling which is 20 mm.

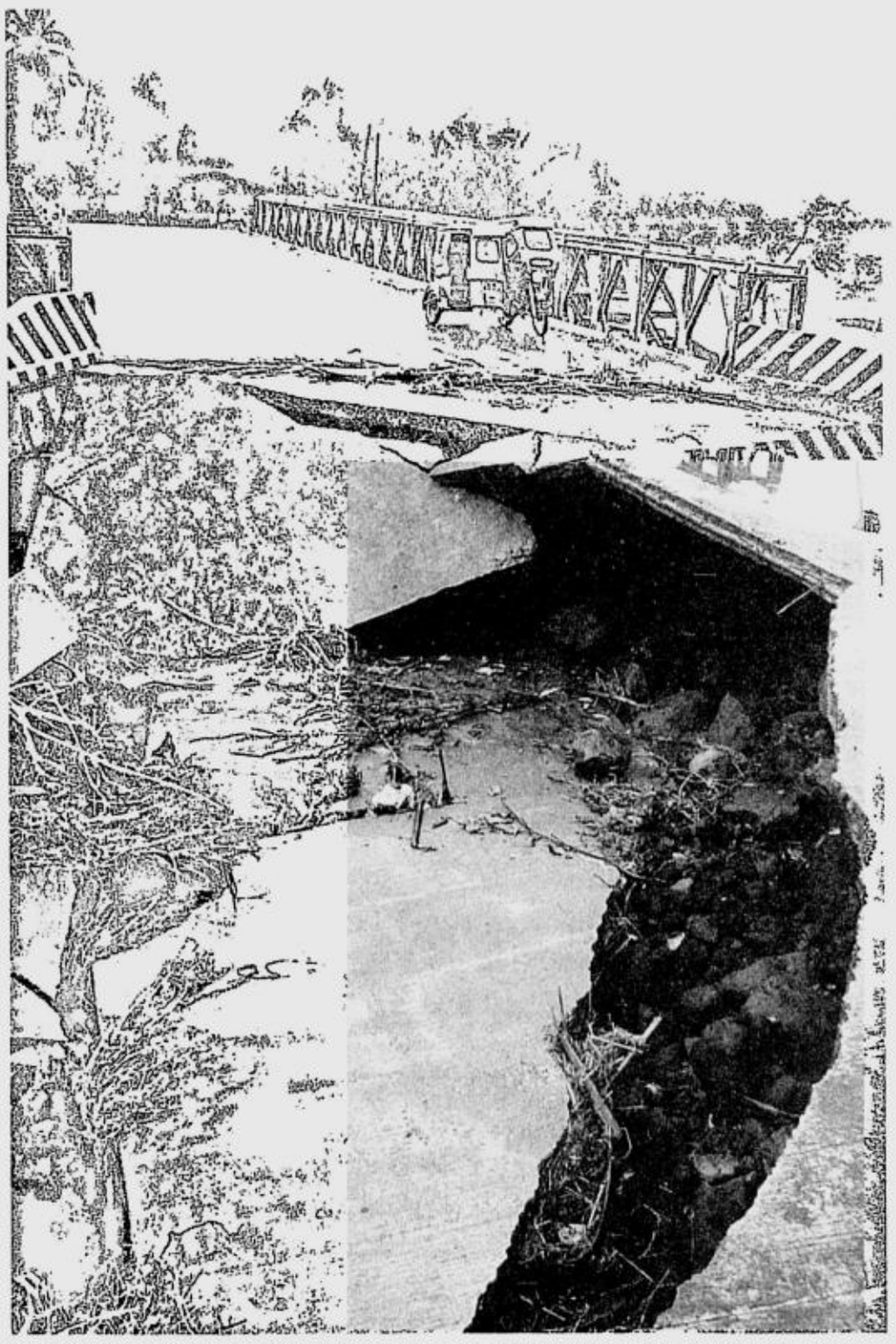
Lapitan said many people in the community even told their office that if the Makiling forest reserve was not well managed, something worse would happen.

She stressed that Mt. Makiling was "intact" before Milenyo struck Southern Luzon.

In coordination with local government units, she said, they would study what steps to take so that the damage in Mt. Makiling's forest reserve and the communities nearby will not worsen.

She said they would proceed in rehabilitating Mt. Makiling within two weeks. "This would mean replanting and 'revegetation' and we would need the people's support."

The Makiling Center for Mountain Ecosystems is under the College of Forestry in the University of the Philippines Los Baños. *Niña Catherine Calleja, Inquirer Southern Luzon*



"MILENYO" brought widespread destruction in the Bicol region. Infrastructure, like this bridge in Guinobatan, Albay, was not spared and showed the extent of the damage. NINO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Cries for help haunt Legazpi storm survivors

LEGAZPI CITY—THERE ARE VOICES HAUNTing Alicia Dalde, 44, of Barangay Baybay this city and these were not from her imagination or dreams. They were those of her neighbors who cried out for help as huge waves slammed their coastal community at the height of Typhoon "Milenyo."

"I heard my neighbors, those who were trapped inside their homes, scream for help," said Dalde, whose neighborhood of at least 285 families sat near this city's port and faced the Albay Gulf.

"That was... when the wind was already blowing violently and the level of seawater flooding our house reached up to my neck," Dalde said as she washed donated clothes beside the rubble of what was once their neighborhood.

The scene after the storm devastated her.

"All our clothes and belongings were gone. None was left. The house that my husband and I worked hard for to build in years vanished in just one night," she said.

It was a house built on savings that Dalde said she put together "at the expense of my health."

"Now, I am sick, my intestines need to be operated on... but I do not have money for that. Worse is, we are now homeless," Dalde added.

Reality, the painful one, was difficult to accept for Dalde. She thought the house could withstand the impact of the storm so when the waves started rising, the family simply left, thinking only of saving their lives.

Her husband, Henry, 39, was left behind to safeguard their belongings, but it would be a futile effort.

He watched helplessly as the waves washed other houses in the village into the sea and went on saving other neighbors when he had the chance to.

"I was trying to push our wall against the waves," Henry said.

He heard a cry for help from neighbors and saw an entire family submerged in water. He was able to save them.

"I saw my friend being carried by the waves as he held on to the floating table that smashed him. I was able to save his life," Henry recalled.

Hipolito Toledo, village chief of Baybay, said Milenyo had brought the worst damage to infrastructure in Barangay Baybay in the last 20 years.

He listed the damage—a basketball court, a day care center, a stage, lamp posts, and street lights that he said were worth some P1 million all in all.

At least 38 families either lost homes or suffered severe damage to their houses. They are now in an evacuation center at a school in the port.

Toledo said what they need urgently are food, medicines and clothes, stuff that Milenyo washed away as it struck.

Village officials were set to meet with Mayor Noel Rosal to discuss the possibility of relocating the neighborhood to a safer place.

They had heard of plans to relocate them, especially people living about 50 meters from the shore. The Daldes were among those strongly supporting the plan. *Report from Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Baguio dads' tempers rise over 11-yr-old's essay

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—SOME CITY COUNcilors here almost came to blows during their Monday session over an 11-year-old student's essay criticizing Baguio's general "unfriendliness" to children's rights.

Councilor Daniel Fariñas, law school dean of the University of Baguio, introduced a resolution adopting the essay of Grade 6 pupil Trisha Joy Esperanza, editor of a UB grade school newspaper, who pointed out Baguio's air pollution, its deteriorating security and even the complete absence of trash cans from city streets in a piece published by a local newspaper.

But several councilors said the proposed resolution smacked of politicking. October is the National Children's month, and local scouts are due to sit as city officials next week.

Fariñas argued with Councilor Jose Molintas, a human rights lawyer, who said that adopting a resolution in this manner would be "mere lip service."

Molintas said passing the resolution sends the signal that the legislative mill is too reactionary, so he suggested asking the city social welfare officer to explain to Esperanza that child-friendly policies are already enforced.

"It's like we are fooling each other here," Molintas said in Ilocano.

Acting Vice Mayor Leandro Yangot Jr. had to suspend the session until tempers subsided.

Fariñas said he did not want to impose Esperanza's impressions on city policy. "I just wanted to encourage children like her to speak out and tell us how they feel [about the way the city is being run]," he said.

Esperanza's essay discussed how the city could improve its "children-friendly standards."

"I have lived in Baguio City for the whole 11 years of my life [and] when I compare our city with other places I have read about, I find [the city] not that bad," she said.

However, she asked the government to pursue policies which would restore the city's environmental health and institutionalize practices to make adults "friendlier" to children.

"Baguio City should have people who are friendlier to children. I once bought [a magazine] at a popular bookstore. As I waited for my turn to pay, the cashier seemed not to notice me... Children are also customers. They should be treated with courtesy," she said.

"Even some jeepney drivers do not pick up children waiting for a ride especially when there are several of them. Is it because we pay [a reduced fare] compared to the adults?"

She observed that the city's air "is black with soot," and trash cans have disappeared from major streets. She also complained about the state of public toilets.

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A18

Filipino climbers witness killings in Tibet

By Alcuin Papa

A TEAM OF FILIPINOS climbing Mt. Cho-Oyu, the world's sixth highest mountain at the border of Nepal and Tibet, witnessed the purported killing of Tibetans by members of the Chinese Army, according to the team doctor.

In a cell phone call to the Inquirer on Saturday, an emotional Dr. Ted Esguerra said he saw at least three people—two women and a man—shot dead on the Nangpa La pass, which can be seen from Cho-Oyu's Advance Base Camp (around 18,000 feet above sea level).

But he added that as many as seven people might have been killed.

Esguerra and other members of the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition are climbing Cho-Oyu (26,906 feet or 8201 meters) as part of their training for next year's attempt on Mt. Everest.

As the team doctor, he has been active in extending free medical assistance to other climbers on the mountain.

"Here I am trying to save lives. Yet I am a witness to the taking of lives," said Esguerra, who sounded as though he were close to tears.

A check with mounteverest.net showed a report saying that a number of Tibetans had been shot at on their way to the Nangpa La pass. Members of the Chinese Army then "swarmed" the advance base camp, the report said.

The website ran this report from an unidentified foreign climber: "Early morning of September 30th, I walked out of our dining tent to gaze [at] the Nangpa La pass. I saw a line of Tibetans heading toward the start of the pass—a common sight, as the trade routes are open this time of year.

"Then, without warning, shots rang out. Over and over and over. Then the line of people started to run uphill—they were at 19,000 feet. Apparently the Chinese Army was tipped off about their attempted escape, and had showed up with guns."

The climber said he saw two people drop to the ground.

"Watching the line snake off through the snow, as the shots rang out, we saw two shapes fall. The binoculars confirmed it: Two people were down, and they weren't getting up. Then more [members of the] Chinese army swarmed through ABC (advance base camp)," the climber said.

Tibetans have used the Nangpa La pass as a trade route for centuries.

Since the Chinese invasion of Tibet in the 1950s, around 2,500 refugees a year have used the route to head to Nepal and India during the winter months and the Cho-Oyu climbing season.

A plus METRO
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil
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30 schools in Metro still closed

Power restoration, repairs being rushed

By Alcuin Papa

CLASSES REMAIN SUSPENDED in 30 schools in Metro Manila, exactly a week after Typhoon "Milenyo" wrought havoc on the metropolis.

Education Secretary Jesli Lapus said yesterday that classes have not resumed in the 30 Metro schools because their buildings either sustained damages during the typhoon, or water and power supply have yet to be restored in the areas where they are located.

Some are also being used as evacuation centers for typhoon victims, he added.

According to Lapus, Milenyo destroyed 867 schools nationwide, with total damages estimated at P241 million.

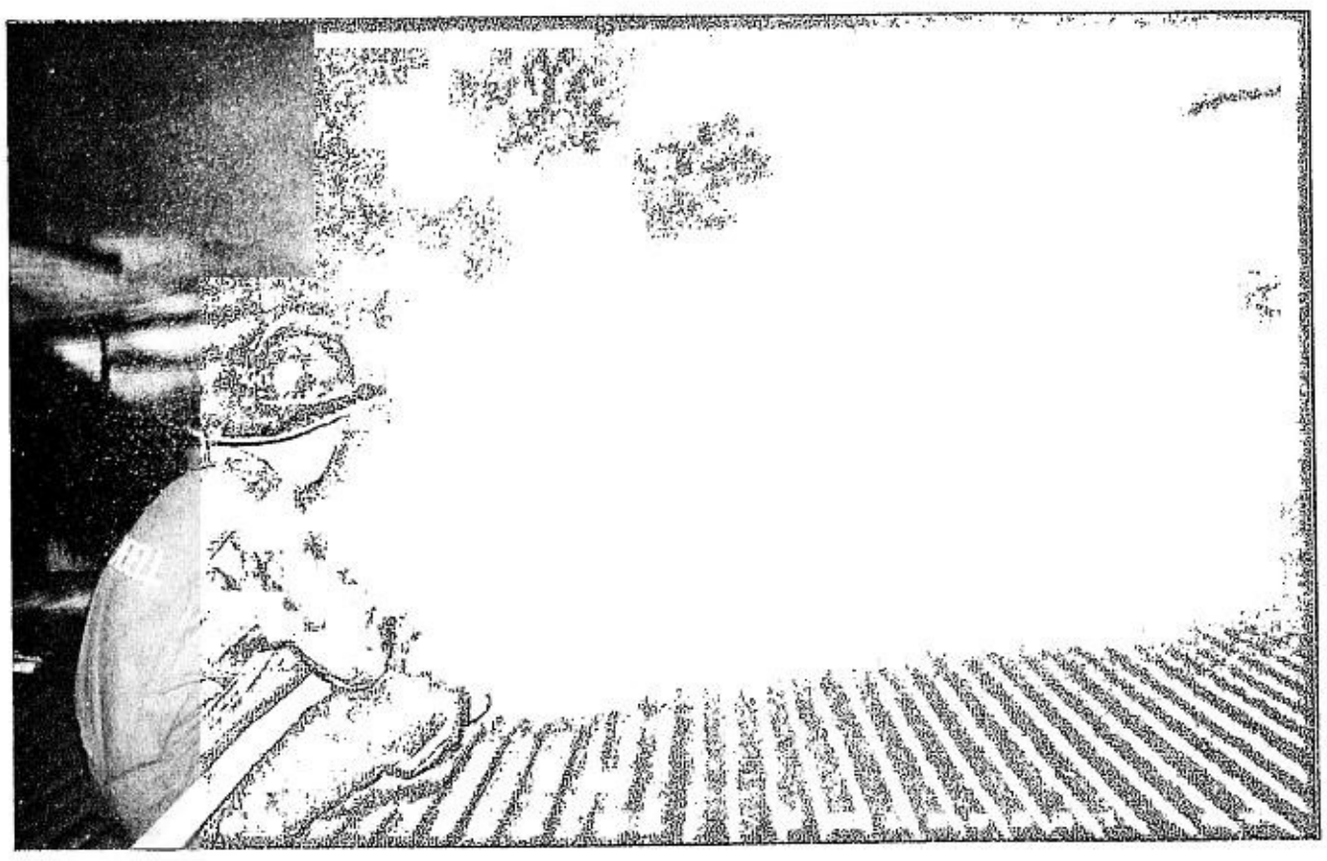
Schools which have yet to reopen are:

- Maharlika Elementary School, Taguig National High School and Western Bicutan High School in the Taguig-Pateros area.
- Las Piñas East High School and CAA National High School in Las Piñas.
- Dampalit Elementary School-Main and Dampalit Elementary School-Unit 1 in the Malabon-Navotas area.
- Buli Elementary and High Schools in Muntinlupa City.
- Villamor Airbase Elementary School, Marcela Marcelo Elementary School, Pasay City West High School, Pasay City East High School and Pasay City South High School in Pasay City.
- Sampaloc Site II Elementary School, San Antonio Elementary School, Don Gallo Elementary School, Colonel E. de Leon Elementary School, F. Serrano Sr. Elementary School, San Agustin Elementary School, Baclaran Elementary School-Unit 2, Dr. Arcadio Santos National High School (Moonwalk Annex) and Parañaque National High School (Don Gallo Annex) in Parañaque City.
- Emilio Jacinto Elementary School, A.V. Hernandez Elementary School, Rosauro Almario Elementary School, Avelino Elementary School, Manuel L. Quezon Elementary School, Dr. Juan G. Nolasco High School and A. Villegas High School in Manila.

Lapus said Region 4-A had the most number of schools affected by Milenyo at 392, with damages estimated at P72 million.

The figure, however, was higher in Region 5 where the typhoon caused P96 million in damages, destroying 201 schools.

In the National Capital Region, a total of 142 schools were affected for a total of P38 million in damages.



A FIREMAN trains his hose on burning houses on Kalayaan Avenue, Barangay Pinagkaisahan in Makati City. Twelve houses were razed on Tuesday night by a fire allegedly started by an unattended candle. *(See story below)*
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Lighted candle leads to fire in Makati City

By Tarra V. Quismundo

WITH ELECTRICITY STILL NOT restored in certain areas in Metro Manila, a fire hit a neighborhood in Makati City the other day, an incident that a fire official said may have been sparked by a lighted candle.

Some P1.5 million worth of property went up in flames when a blaze burned down 12 houses on Kalayaan Avenue in Barangay Pinagkaisahan at around 5:06 p.m. Tuesday, the Makati Fire Station said yesterday.

"I have instructed arson investigators to determine the cause of the fire because when we got there, there was still no power ... Residents told us that it may have been caused by a lit candle left in one of the houses," said Chief Insp. Rogelio Bucayu, officer in charge of the city's fire station.

A report filed by investigator Wilfredo Nardo said that the blaze started on the upper floor of the house of Rey Edanol.

Minutes before the fire, Edanol's maid had told his relatives that she smelled something burning in the house.

When they checked, they saw smoke coming from the upper floor. The blaze then spread to 11 other houses in the neighborhood, Bucayu said.

"The houses were made of light materials that's why the fire spread quickly," he added.

Dennis Serdena, 27, one of the residents in the area, was injured after he tried to douse the flames in his house, Nardo said in his report.

The blaze was finally put out at 7:25 p.m. after 43 fire trucks responded to the call for help.

Cops link Valenzuela barangay official to slays

By DJ Yap

A BARANGAY CAPTAIN AND SIX watchmen or "tanod" in Valenzuela City were arrested yesterday for their alleged role in the killing of six factory workers whose bullet-riddled bodies were discovered in Caloocan City on Sunday.

Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Northern Police District director, identified the barangay captain as Graciano Victoriano of Bignay, Valenzuela City.

Victoriano and the six watchmen were arrested by operatives of the Caloocan City police station led by Supt. Napoleon Cuaton.

Based on the testimonies of witnesses, the suspects were the ones who killed the victims who worked at Kem Dragon Corp., a smelting firm in Meycauayan, Bulacan.

The victims were Ramon Villanueva, 37; Arthur Cadorna, 26; Alfredo Asuero, 26; Jefferson Agripinan, 19; Remy Ponteros, 22 and Junrel Menuiso, 22.

Cuaton said it was a case of "abuse of authority." According to him, the victims were having a drinking spree when they were arrested by the barangay watchmen.

"They were killed for no reason at all," he said.

Erratum

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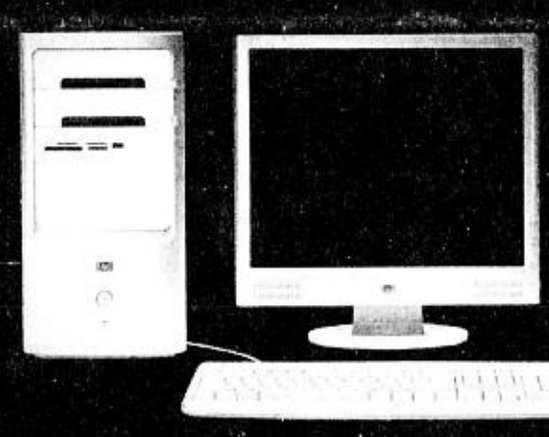

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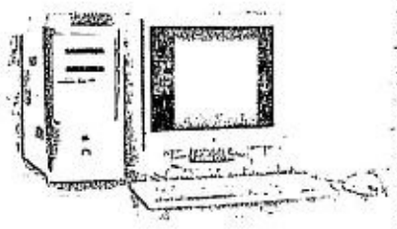

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DOH monitors two dengue hot spots in metropolis

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE SPREAD OF DENGUE FEVER HAS slowed down nationwide but health officials are still monitoring two hot spots in Metro Manila where the number of cases is still increasing.

Dr. Eric Tayag, chief of the Department of Health's National Epidemiology Center, identified the two hot spots as Barangay Tatalon in Quezon City and Dagat-Dagatan in Navotas, both of which are also prone to floods.

But Tayag said the dengue alarm in other areas has already been lowered while only four regions—the National Capital Region, Cordillera Autonomous Region, Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon—have reported a slight increase in cases in the last few weeks.

Health Secretary Francisco Duque III, meanwhile, said that from January to Sept. 22, the number of dengue cases nationwide has reached 21,250.

The figure, however, was still lower than the 27,705 cases reported during the same period last year.

"We are hoping that the number of cases this year would not exceed that of last year," he told reporters.

Under control

Tayag said the dengue epidemic reported in Valenzuela City last week has finally been placed under control.

Valenzuela officials had announced earlier that the number of cases in the city went up by over 100 percent compared to the 2005 figure.

Tayag said health officials were now monitoring three barangays in the city: Malinta, Marulas and Gen. T. de Leon which still have dengue cluster areas, meaning, the cases were concentrated in certain areas.

Valenzuela City epidemiologist Manuel Mapue said they have monitored at least nine new cases in the past week, much lower compared to the 27 reported in the previous week.

So far, the city has recorded 740 dengue cases with 10 deaths, Mapue added.

The spread of dengue fever usually slows down during this time of the year, after peaking between August and September, Tayag explained.

But he said the effective implementation of preventive measures in Valenzuela City and other areas had also contributed much to controlling the spread of the illness.

Duque said he has already asked Mayor Sherwin Gatchalian to coordinate with the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority for the dredging of waterways in the city.

Dengue-carrying mosquitoes usually breed in clean, stagnant water.

CA grants 60-day reprieve to suspended Pasay official

By Armand N. Nocum and Tarra V. Quismundo

THE COURT OF APPEALS YESTERDAY ISSUED a 60-day temporary restraining order which effectively stopped the Ombudsman and the Department of the Interior and Local Government from enforcing the six-month suspension order issued against Pasay Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto.

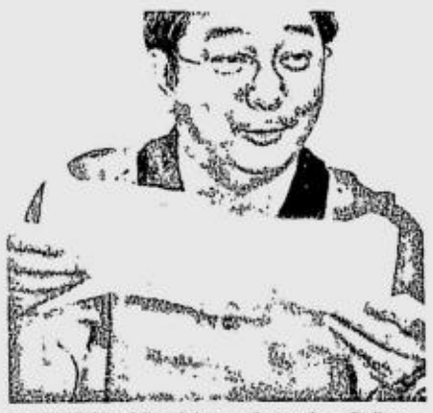
In granting Calixto's plea for a TRO, the court said it wanted to preserve' his rights while the case against him is being heard.

Calixto, Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad and 10 councilors were suspended over than a month ago by the Ombudsman for entering into allegedly anomalous contracts for the collection and disposal of Pasay's garbage.

"In the interest of justice and in order to preserve the rights of the parties, particularly the petitioner Antonino G. Calixto ... during the pendency of the proceedings, a 60-day temporary restraining order is hereby issued ... enjoining the public respondents ... to desist from continuing with the enforcement of the assailed Aug. 25, 2006 order of preventive suspension ..." the court said.

The CA also ordered Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and barangay captain Juanito Delmendo—who had filed the complaint against the city officials—to comment within 10 days on the petition filed by Calixto and councilor Noel Bayona asking the court to permanently stop the Ombudsman from ordering their suspension.

However, the court did not state whether Calixto can take over as the city's acting mayor or in place of Councilor Alan Panaligan. Another councilor, Arvin Tolentino, has been appointed acting vice mayor.



PASAY City Vice Mayor Antonino Calixto shows reporters a copy of the Court of Appeals order stopping the Ombudsman from enforcing an order which suspended him from office for six months. EDWIN BACASMAS

But this did not stop Calixto from going to City Hall immediately after the CA announced its decision.

"I came back here because this TRO restores me as vice mayor. There are many people calling me acting mayor but let's not go into that. I am just following the process," he told reporters.

Tolentino had just left the vice mayor's office when Calixto arrived. Joseph Castillo, the city legal officer, meanwhile, asked him to leave upon Panaligan's request, saying his presence might stir up his supporters.

The vice mayor, however, stood his ground and Castillo left shortly.

PETS owned by Makati residents are blessed at the City Hall quadrangle as the country's business center marked World Pet Day yesterday. REM ZAMORA

Makati celebrates World Pet Day

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FROM TINY MONGRELS TO CHUBBY PITBULLS, WELL-groomed Dalmatians to stern German shepherds, dogs had a field day in the financial capital of Makati when the city marked World Pet Day yesterday.

Accompanied by their masters, hundreds of dogs gathered at the Makati City Hall quadrangle to snag "freebies" the local government has been providing annually for the city's canine population: anti-rabies shots, vitamins, dog food and deworming services.

From 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon, more than 300 dogs belonging to residents of the city availed of the free services during the celebration which was dubbed "Makati City Cares."

"It is very important because rabies is a fatal disease, but it can be prevented. Dogs are the primary carriers. We have a regular program wherein we provide vaccination in barangays and conduct an information drive in schools to promote responsible pet ownership, and this is part of that," said city veterinarian Dr. Vivien Manalastas.

Manalastas added that while there were incidents of dogs biting, there have been no reports so far of rabies cases, an indication that most of the city's roughly 11,000 canines were free of the disease,

Roughly 80 percent of the city's dog population have been regularly receiving anti-rabies shots, she said.

Dog owner Rey Resonar, 38, could not have raised Inching, a one-year-old Siberian wolf, if not for the city's free yearly pet services.

"It is very important to me because it cuts the cost of caring for my dog," said Resonar, a company driver living in Barangay Palanan.

A father of two, Resonar said he could only buy his pet dog food whenever he had spare cash. Usually though, Inching, a gift from his former boss six months ago, would eat rice and leftovers.

"It's not hard to maintain him because he is a very obedient pet," said Resonar, while holding Inching's leash.

Accused in poisoning incident arraigned

By DJ Yap

ONE OF THE TWO ACCUSED IN THE CONTROversial poisoning incident at Philippine Science High School has pleaded innocent to frustrated murder charges before a Quezon City court.

The respondent, a minor, stands accused of helping a classmate pour a vial of mercurous nitrate into a water jug, from which a student drank, causing her to sustain severe internal injuries. He was arraigned yesterday at the sala of Judge Ma. Lourdes Giron of the QC Regional Trial Court Branch 102.

His co-accused, however, asked for the deferment of the proceedings while the city prosecutor is acting on his motion for reconsideration questioning the finding of probable cause in his case.

Both parties are facing allegations that they had tried to poison their classmate, Marie Angelynne Fabro, on Feb. 14 by lacing their classmate's water jug with the poisonous substance.

Originally, only one student was charged, but in the course of the preliminary investigation, one of the principal witnesses was found to have been directly involved in the incident.

In their respective counter-affidavits, the two students, who were later expelled from PSHS, gave conflicting statements as to who was the one liable.

Fabro, now a chemical engineering freshman at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, was hospitalized and had to undergo dialysis for several days.

METROBRIEFS

Let us in, please

ENVIRONMENTAL advocates have organized a group of workers and volunteers to restore Arroceros Forest Park where several trees were uprooted and damaged by Typhoon "Milenyo" last week. Regina Paterno, president of park caretaker Winner Foundation, has written a letter appealing to Mayor Lito Atienza to allow them to do repair work inside the forest. "It has been our practice in the aftermath of typhoons to immediately respond to rescue fallen trees and do the necessary replanting. We have seedlings and saplings available," Paterno told the Inquirer. She said they have been continuously denied access to the park by security guards who claimed that they were only following orders from Atienza and division of city schools superintendent Luisa Quinones. "The security officers claimed they have specific orders not to allow members of our group and the media to enter the park," Paterno added.

Tina G. Santos

Free breast clinic

THE ASIAN Hospital and Medical Center will be holding a free breast clinic in celebration of Breast Cancer Awareness month this October. Dr. Rouel Azores said experts would be conducting free consultations and clinical breast examinations on Saturday, Oct. 7, from 9 a.m. to noon in the hospital's emergency room. "Breast cancer is the number one cancer affecting women today. One in eight women will develop breast cancer in her lifetime, regardless of family history. The only hope of surviving breast cancer is early detection." he said. He added that the hospital's free breast clinic is part of its efforts to educate women of their risk of developing breast cancer so it can be detected early.

NBI agents nab alleged Quiapo druglord

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE ALLEGED TOP SUPPLIER OF methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu in Quiapo, Manila was arrested by operatives of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) who raided his home early yesterday morning.

Described by NBI officials as the "druglord of druglords in the area," Mike Macaumbao was nabbed with his relative, a certain Said, at around 6:30 a.m. on Carlos Palanca Street.

The NBI also invited for questioning more than 10 men believed to be Macaumbao's henchmen.

According to NBI Reaction, Arrest and Interdiction Division (RAID) chief Roel Bolivar, their operatives began conducting surveillance operations after an informant told them about the suspects' illegal drug trade in Quiapo.

After confirming the information, the NBI immediately applied for a search warrant at the Manila Regional Trial Court.

Bolivar said operatives conducted the raid yesterday on the basis of the warrant, seizing an undisclosed quantity of suspected shabu from the houses of both Macaumbao and Said.

He added that agents had to use acetylene torches in destroying the steel gates of the suspects' houses.

"Macaumbao, according to residents and barangay officials, was the main source of shabu in Quiapo and other Muslim communities in the city," Bolivar said.

The NBI official added that the suspect was believed to be the mastermind behind unsolved killings in Quiapo.

"Macaumbao allegedly asked his men to hunt down, imprison and even kill those who were not able to pay for the drugs they purchased from him," Bolivar said.

According to the NBI official, the suspect had built a mini jail in his house, where he allegedly detained his debtors.

Bolivar said the bureau would look into the Palanca police community precinct's failure to stop the drug activities in the area.

The suspects refused to comment on the accusations against them, emphasizing their right to talk through a legal counsel.

The two face charges of violating Republic Act 9165 or the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

DID YOU KNOW

In 2004, the cadena de amor (chain of love) was declared Metro Manila's official flower.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando said the flower symbolizes "the love that binds Metro Manilans." He added that cadena de amor vines, which grow and spread vigorously, represent "Manila's pervasive influence on the other regions of the country."

The flowers have been planted on center islands on Edsa.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

'Ombudsgirl' Gutierrez escapes to Switzerland

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

"NO TALK," ACCORDING TO AN INQUIRER front-page photo caption under Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez referring to her office's exonerating Commission on Election (Comelec) officials in the P1.3-billion poll automation deal.

The "Ombudsgirl," as Sen. Joker Arroyo refers to the woman "graft-buster," is not in the country. She flew to Switzerland on the pretext of attending an international conference, according to my sources.

She'll probably be out of the country for two weeks and expects that by then, the public would have cooled down on the controversial decision.

But even if Gutierrez stays abroad for one or two months, she'll have to return to face inquisitive journalists. The controversial issue won't die down for a long time.

She will have a hard time fielding questions when she returns.

But by then, after probably thinking of all the questions that would be asked of her and rehearsing what she would say, Ombudsgirl Gutierrez might be able to give convincing replies. Who knows?

* * *

My sources at the Office of the Ombudsman say that "outside pressure" on the Mega Pacific deal—not poor health—was the reason Gutierrez's predecessor, Simeon Marcelo, resigned.

The pressure was too much for Marcelo who, my sources say, was as strong as a bull when he quit.

He came from the Carpio Villaraza and Cruz Law Offices, now known as "The Firm."

Marcelo, according to the same sources, was for the filing of cases with the Sandiganbayan against the respondents.

Gutierrez, who was justice undersecretary before she replaced Marcelo, was a recommendee of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo for the vacated post. She and Arroyo were classmates at the Ateneo Law School.

Now, the $64-question is, who pressured Marcelo?

* * *

Commission on Human Rights chair Purificacion Quisumbing castigated the Melo Commission for sending her a subpoena when an invitation would have been enough.

She said she would have accepted the invitation, anyway.

The commission, chaired by retired Supreme Court Associate Justice Jose Melo, was formed to investigate the unabated killings of journalists and leftists.

Many believe it was set up to appease foreign countries and institutions that have been criticizing the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo for the murders.

Now, Quisumbing acted according to her position as head of a government independent body. The summons was a sign of disrespect not only for her position, but for the CHR as well.

Being a retired justice, Melo should have known that.

Oh, well, power intoxicates, and when one is drunk, he most of the time forgets good manners and right conduct!

* * *

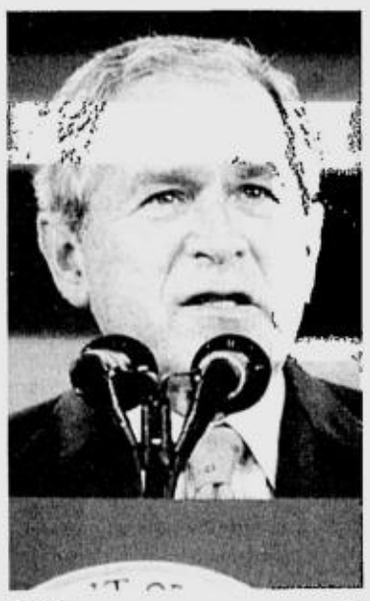
To Melo's credit, he took Quisumbing's tirade in stride, saying he understood her position.

"Understandably, she may be a little sensitive. She may feel the Melo Commission is intruding (on the CHR's turf), and she may not take it in a very good light," the retired justice said.

Of course, how could Quisumbing just keep quiet while a parallel investigative body, set up to please the outside world, trample on the CHR like a doormat?

If Quisumbing didn't react the way she did, she might as well have asked that the CHR be disbanded.

Bush 'disgusted' as Republican sex scandal worsens


BUSH AFP

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT George W. Bush said Tuesday he was "disgusted" by a Republican party sex scandal worsened by new revelations over messages sent between a top lawmaker and teenaged Congress aides.

Just over a month from a key election in which the president's party now faces losing control of Congress, ABC television released details of a possible romantic relationship between former representative Mark Foley and a young male congressional page.

"I was dismayed and shocked to learn about Congressman Foley's unacceptable behavior," Bush said during a visit to a school in Stockton, California.

"I was disgusted by the revelations and disappointed that he would violate the trust of the citizens that placed him in office," Bush added.

But the scandal widened with the new reports of Foley's activities and there were calls for the resignation of the Republican leader in the House of Representatives, Speaker Dennis Hastert, for failing to take action over the scandal.

Foley, who represents Palm Beach county in Florida, abruptly resigned Friday after sexually explicit e-mails to a former male page were published.

ABC television revealed salacious new details of additional e-mails which suggested a possible relationship with an underage congressional aide.

ABC published new intimate e-mail exchanges between Foley and a young congressional page, who exchanged Internet kisses and made plans for a future encounter.

Until Tuesday, most of the exchanges made public showed Foley propositioning congressional pages, who did not appear to entirely return his advances.

In an April 2003 message made public Tuesday however, Foley invited a teen to come to his home to drink alcohol. The teenager enthusiastically accepted the offer.

ABC said that during one vote in Congress, Foley and the teenager described how they were having cybersex "orgasms." Foley has entered a alcoholism rehabilitation clinic but his attorney David Roth disclosed Tuesday however that his client had been sexually abused by a clergy member as a teenager.

"Between the ages of 13 and 15 he was molested," Roth told a Palm Beach, Florida press conference.

Roth also insisted that the relationships were never physically intimate. "Mark Foley has never had sexual contact with a minor," Roth said.

But revelations over the veteran Republican lawmakers activities could persuade many conservatives to boycott the Nov. 7 midterm elections, according to many analysts.

Conservative voters, who often are moved to turn out in force at the polls to vote on "values issues" such as abortion and banning gay marriage, reportedly are disgusted by the reports.

Democrats are now favored to win back a majority in the House, according to many polls.

The conservative Washington Times newspaper on Tuesday said House speaker Dennis Hastert should resign for not preventing the scandal.

"Resign, Mr. Speaker," blared The Times, saying Hastert "dissembled, to put it charitably," before acknowledging that he had known for months that Foley had sent inappropriate e-mails to underage male aides.

"Either he was grossly negligent ... or he deliberately looked the other way," the daily charged.

But Bush supported Hastert's call for a law enforcement probe into the e-mails and text messages sent by Foley. Hastert "wants all the facts to come out," said the president. *AFP*

US, Britain warn of sanctions versus Iran

TEHRAN—THE UNITED STATES and Britain said on Tuesday Iran could soon face sanctions because it showed no sign of halting sensitive nuclear work, while the EU said the latest talks had been helpful but had brought no breakthrough.

A senior Iranian atomic official said suspending uranium enrichment, which the West says Iran wants to use to build atomic bombs, would not solve the nuclear standoff.

The deputy head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, Mohammad Saeedi, instead suggested France could invest in Iran's nuclear industry, enabling it to supervise Tehran's work.

Similar proposals for foreign investment in the past found no takers. The West has opposed plans that would keep enrichment on Iranian soil and allow Tehran to master the technology, which Iran says it wants so that it can generate electricity.

European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana, who has been trying to coax Iran into halting enrichment, said a telephone conversation on Monday with Iran's nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani was constructive but had not broken the impasse.

"We still have some elements that need to be agreed. We will continue talking," Solana said, adding that the proposal for French monitoring was interesting but needed more analysis.

A French Foreign Ministry spokesperson said there were no direct talks between Paris and Tehran and said the Larijani-Solana meetings were the forum for dialogue.

The United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany have offered Iran economic and political incentives to halt enrichment. In its reply, Iran hinted at some flexibility over suspension but not as a precondition for talks.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told Al Arabiya television in Cairo it appeared that Iran was not going to suspend enrichment. "If it doesn't suspend, then resolution 1696 is very clear, that we would move to measures ... " she said. *Reuters*

AZTEC GOD Mexican archaeologists discovered this image of an agriculture deity of ancient Aztecs in downtown Mexico City Oct. 3. An image of the Aztec god Tlaloc (rain), an altar and a three-meter monolith were also found, the National Institute of Anthropology and History said. AFP

US to scan global news for negative opinions

WASHINGTON—A CONSORTIUM of major universities, with Homeland Security Department funds, is developing software that would let the government monitor negative opinions of the United States or its leaders in newspapers and other publications overseas.

The "sentiment analysis" is intended to identify potential threats to the nation, security officials said.

Researchers at institutions including Cornell, the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Utah intend to test the system on hundreds of articles published in 2001 and 2002 on topics like President Bush's use of the term "axis of evil," the handling of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, the debate over global warming and the coup attempt against President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela.

A $2.4 million grant will finance the research over three years.

American officials have long relied on newspapers and other news sources to track events and opinions here and abroad, a goal that has included the routine translation of articles from many foreign publications and news services.

The new software would allow much more rapid and comprehensive monitoring of the global news media, as the Homeland Security Department and, perhaps, intelligence agencies look "to identify common patterns from numerous sources of information which might be indicative of potential threats to the nation," a statement by the department said.

It could take several years for such a monitoring system to be in place, said Joe Kielman, coordinator of the research effort. The monitoring would not extend to US news, Kielman said.

"We want to understand the rhetoric that is being published and how intense it is, such as the difference between dislike and excoriate," he said.

Even the basic research has raised concern among journalism advocates and privacy groups, as well as representatives of the foreign news media.

"It is just creepy and Orwellian," said Lucy Dalglish, a lawyer and former editor who is executive director of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. *NYT*

Iraqis welcome new peace plan

BAGHDAD—IRAQ'S PARLIAMENT on Tuesday welcomed an agreement designed to staunch sectarian bloodshed in Baghdad, but there was no sign of further talks to add substance to the prime minister's sketchy four-point plan.

"I salute you brothers," Adnan al-Dulaimi, a leader from the minority Sunni Arab community, said of what some have dubbed the "Ramadan Agreement" to form neighborhood committees in the capital to curb violence during the Muslim holy month.

"We want to turn this pact from words into reality." But talk of a follow-up meeting after Monday night's talks with Shiite Muslim Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki evaporated during the day, and several negotiators said no further detail would be put on the plan before Wednesday at the earliest.

Any hope of success rests on securing the goodwill of leaders who actually control party and sectarian militias blamed for hundreds of death squad killings a week in the capital. But many gunmen behind mass kidnappings, assassinations and torture appear to be beyond the control of mainstream leaders.

Hadi al-Amery, a Shiite member of parliament and leader of the Badr Organization which denies accusations of militia violence, said all leaders had to control their supporters.

"Everyone is responsible," he told the chamber. Referring to a major Sunni party, he said: "We want everyone who signed the agreement to control their followers. I can control groups and so can the Islamic Party—so we can end sectarian bloodshed." Washington's ambassador and its top general in Iraq welcomed the pact as a significant step in the right direction.

The US military said eight soldiers were killed on Monday, four by a roadside bomb and four others by insurgents, taking the US death toll to 15 since Saturday.

But several Shiite and Sunni leaders remained at odds in their interpretations of what was outlined by Maliki.

One negotiator denounced it as a hollow sham. Another said it was merely a stop-gap to relieve US pressure on Maliki.

The formation of local security committees for Baghdad is the plan's first initiative. The committees should involve political, tribal and religious leaders and the Iraqi military.

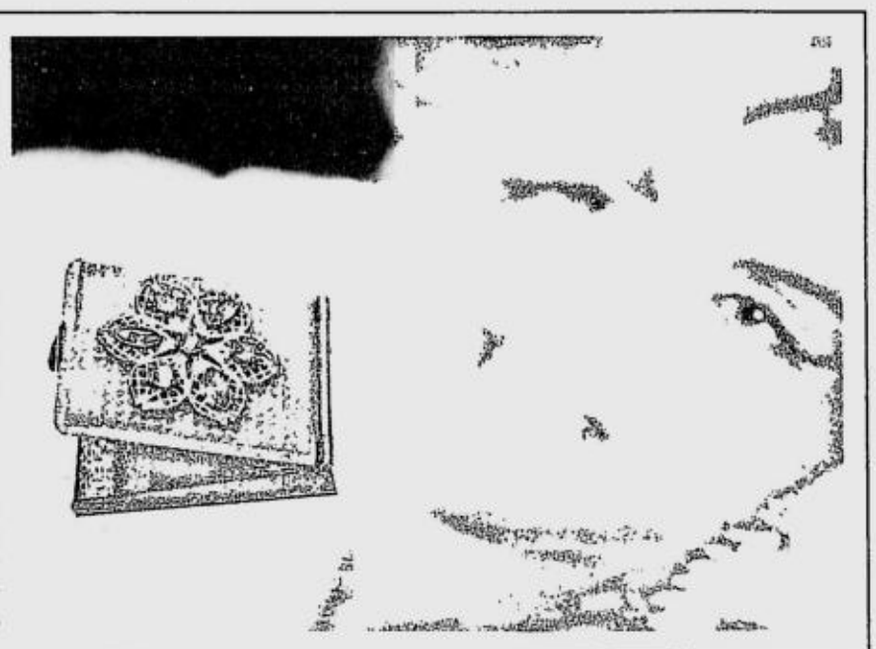
But officials said the powers and make-up were still undecided.

Dulaimi said all the parties would sit on every committee, whatever the sectarian make-up of the neighborhood concerned.

But Shiite negotiator Abdul Kareem al-Anizi said the committees would reflect the local populations.

For example, the Shiite militia stronghold of Sadr City would have few Sunnis on its committee. Such imbalances could be common—in months of ethnic cleansing, thousands of Baghdad's seven million people have fled areas where they feel in a minority.

The second point of the plan is a Central Committee for Peace and Security. The third element would be new oversight of the media and the fourth monthly reviews of the plan. *Reuters*


LOVE MEMENTO. A matchbook case that was given to Marilyn Monroe by baseball legend Joe DiMaggio is shown at Heritage Auction Galleries in Dallas, Oct. 2. The matchbook case will be part of a music and entertainment auction at the gallery scheduled for Friday and Saturday. AP

Gunman may have planned sex assault

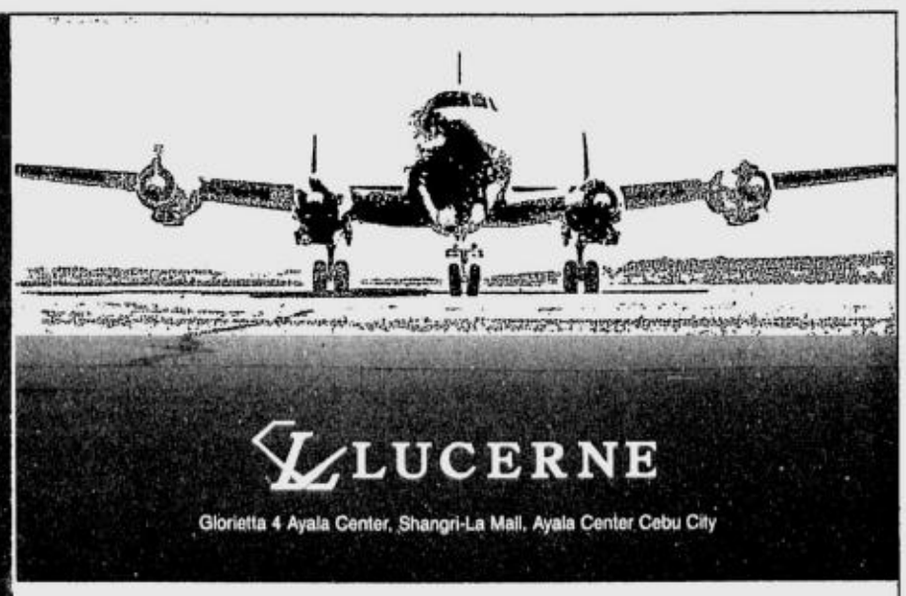
NICKEL MINES, PA.—THE man who stormed an Amish school and killed five girls had confessed to his wife he molested two girls 20 years ago, and police said he may have planned to sexually abuse his 10 hostages.

Charles Carl Roberts, a 32-year-old dairy truck driver, was also haunted by the death of his daughter who died 20 minutes after her premature birth nine years ago, police said on Tuesday after examining suicide notes he left before Monday's rampage.

Roberts dropped his older children off at a school bus stop on Monday morning, then armed himself with three guns, 600 rounds of ammunition and an array of tools and headed for the Amish school.

He had planned for a long siege by preparing to barricade himself and his hostages inside the one-room Georgetown School in rural Lancaster County, 100 km west of Philadelphia.

Police say he chose the Georgetown School because it was an easy target rather than out of any grudge against the Amish. *Reuters*



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THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2006

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US to Thai junta: Lift martial law ASAP

BANGKOK—THE UNITED STATES on Wednesday urged Thailand's military coup leaders to lift martial law within seven to 10 days and to bring forward elections the generals have promised for late next year.

"A year seems like a very long time," said a US embassy official in Bangkok, speaking on condition of anonymity. The diplomat added that "if martial law is not lifted in a week to 10 days, that would be a problem."

The junta that ousted premier Thaksin Shinawatra on Sept. 19 installed retired General Surayud Chulanont last weekend as interim prime minister until polls they have promised for October 2007.

The generals had initially pledged to make way for a civilian government, but their new constitution maintains military influence over the new premier, and restrictions on political activity and the media remain in place.

The White House had called Tuesday for "a quick return" to democracy in Thailand and warned its new military leaders that Washington was weighing action beyond US sanctions imposed last week.

Spokesperson Dana Perino said Thailand's relations with the United States and its global image would suffer until it returns to democratic rule.

"We call for clear and unambiguous protection for civil liberties by the interim authorities and the military, and a quick return to democratic elections," she said as US President George W. Bush visited California.

"Thailand's image in the eyes of the world and US-Thai relations will suffer until Thailand returns to its place as a democratic leader in Asia," she said.

Perino said the United States had "noted" the appointment of Surayud as interim prime minister, as well as the promulgation of an interim constitution.

"We remain concerned by restrictions on civil liberties, provisions in the draft constitution that appear to give the military an ongoing and influential role in decision-making, and the lengthy timetable for democratic elections," she said.

"Following the implementation of Section 508 sanctions last week, we are assessing additional next steps to be taken," she warned.

The United States halted $24 million in military aid for Thailand last week in protest at the Sept. 19 coup by top generals who ousted civilian prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra over corruption allegations.

The sanctions jolted years of close links between US forces and Thailand, a non-Nato ally—the closest US designation a foreign military, that is not a member of the Western alliance, can enjoy.

Some aid deemed crucial to US national security was spared, notably in the field of counterterrorism, in which the kingdom has emerged as a low-key, yet valued partner in the US battle against al-Qaida. *AFP*

ANDROMEDA EXPOSED
This image shows the Andromeda galaxy, exposed in this new composite image from NASA's Galaxy Evolution Explorer and the Spitzer Space Telescope. Galaxy Evolution Explorer detected young, hot, high-mass stars, which are represented in blue, while populations of relatively older stars are shown as green dots. The bright yellow spot at the galaxy's center depicts a particularly dense population of old stars. Swaths of red in the galaxy's disk indicate areas where Spitzer found cool, dusty regions where stars are forming. These stars are still shrouded by the cosmic clouds of dust and gas that collapsed to form them. Located 2.5 million light-years away, the Andromeda is our largest nearby galactic neighbor. AP

US pair wins physics Nobel for backing up Big Bang

STOCKHOLM—AMERICANS JOHN MATHER and George Smoot won the 2006 Nobel prize for physics on Tuesday for finding the background radiation that finally nailed down the Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe.

The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, which awarded the 10 million Swedish crown ($1.37 million) prize, said the two men were instrumental to the success of the cosmic background explorer (COBE) satellite program launched by NASA in 1989.

Their work took the Big Bang theory, which holds that the universe began 14 billion years ago as a tiny dot that exploded into today's huge system of stars and planets, out of the realm of mathematical equations.

"Cosmology now is a precision science," said Lawrence Krauss, a theoretical physicist at Case Western University in Ohio.

"It cemented what we call the hot big bang model," added Michael Turner, an astronomer and astrophysicist at the University of Chicago.

When Mather and Smoot's research was published in 1992, famed cosmologist Stephen Hawking called it the "greatest discovery of the century, if not of all time." Mather gave credit to his whole team.

"In total there were 1,500 people, so it's a huge team effort that we're recognizing today," he told Reuters.

"We knew it was important. Now everybody knows it's important," Mather told a news conference later.

"It is extremely important for human beings to know their origins and their place in the world," added Smoot.

The so-called blackbody radiation they looked at allowed the laureates to show the universe had cooled from its initial fiery 3,000 degrees centigrade to a chill 2.7 degrees Kelvin above absolute zero.

SMOOT REUTERS

MATHER REUTERS

Their measurements also showed temperature variations in background radiation in space, in the range of a hundred-thousandth of a degree, that offered clues as to how galaxies, stars and planets were formed as matter coalesced.

These "ripples" in space provided new clues about galaxy and star formation and why matter had been concentrated in a specific place rather than spreading out.

"Tiny variations in temperature could show where matter had started aggregating. Once this process had started, gravitation would take care of the rest—matter attracts matter which leads to stars and galaxies forming," the Academy said.

Mather, 60, coordinated the COBE program and spearheaded one of its key experiments, while astrophysicist Smoot, 61, of the University of California, Berkeley, was responsible for measuring small temperature variations in the radiation.

Smoot told Reuters the Nobel committee called him after first dialing the wrong number. "I was particularly surprised because my phone is unlisted," he told a news conference. *Reuters*

Russia, Georgia tensions escalate

MOSCOW—DIPLOMATIC TENsions between Russia and Georgia worsened significantly Tuesday as Russian officials vowed to impose indefinite economic sanctions on their southern neighbor.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergey V. Lavrov, said the suspension of transportation links and postal service—announced Monday and effective early Tuesday—were intended to cut what he described as illegal transfers of cash from the sizable Georgian diaspora in Russia, which he said were being used to finance Georgia's military buildup.

He said the sanctions would go into force despite the release Monday of four Russian military officers, whose arrests by Georgia last week on charges of espionage sparked a new round of furious accusations between the two countries.

Russia's lower house of Parliament announced it was drafting a bill that would bar all money transfers to Georgia, estimated to make up a significant part of Georgia's economy.

Lavrov said Georgia was seeking to expand its military in preparation for seizing control of two breakaway regions, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which receive significant support from Russia.

New York Times News Service

US cautions N. Korea on nuclear test

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES ON Tuesday warned North Korea against conducting a "reckless" and "very provocative" nuclear weapons test and worked to stiffen global resolve to forcefully confront Pyongyang.

Top US diplomats sounded out their counterparts in key countries like China and Russia and pushed for UN Security Council action under a July resolution punishing North Korea after the Stalinist regime test-fired a wave of missiles.

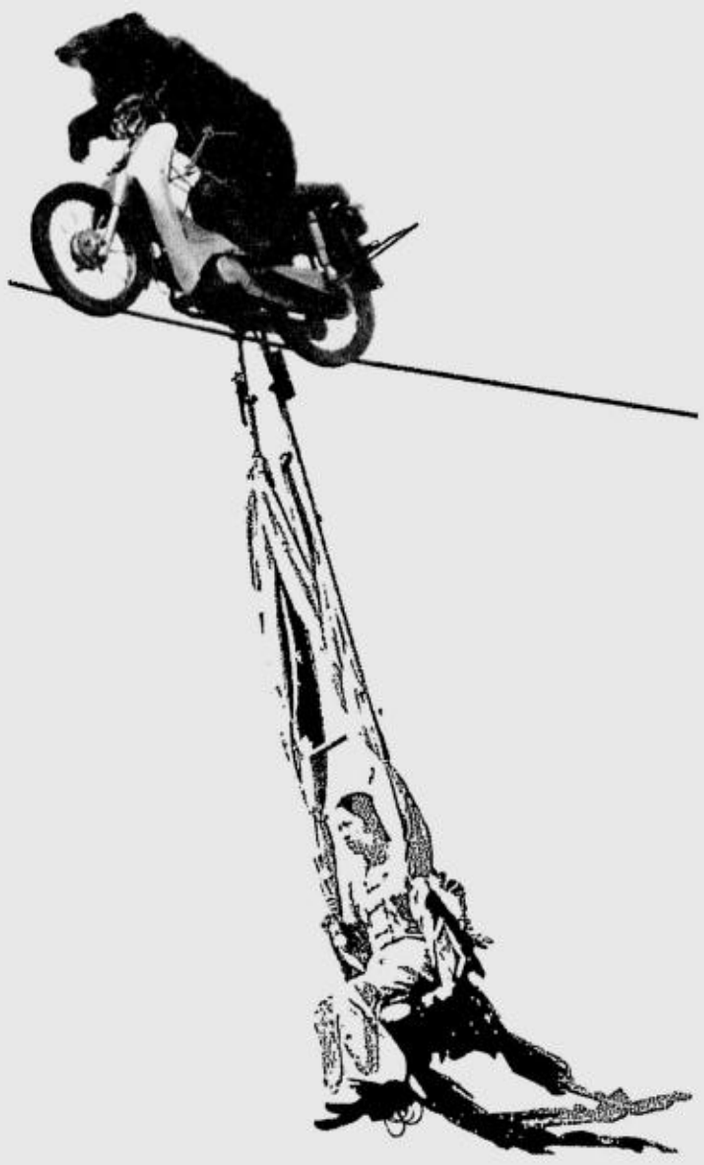
In Cairo, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said a nuclear weapons test would be a "very provocative" act and predicted that "a number of countries would reassess" their approach towards Pyongyang.

While she did not name them, Washington has long pushed China and South Korea to take a harder line on North Korea, which declared in February 2005 it had nuclear weapons.

At the White House, national security spokesperson Frederick Jones said "the United States will continue to work with its allies and partners to discourage such a reckless action and will respond appropriately."

"We stand firmly with our allies in the region and reaffirm our commitment to their security," said Jones, who suggested that a test would imperil a package of incentives offered to North Korea in September 2005.

The United States wants its partners in the talks, as well as the UN Security Council, "to exert every effort to persuade North Korea that the test of a nuclear weapon would only bring its further isolation and would not be in the interest of the North Korean people," said Jones. *AFP*



TOUGH BALANCING ACT
A black bear rides a motorcycle on a tightrope with a girl balancing on a swing during a performance at an animal show in China's Nanjing city, Oct.3, as part of China's week-long national day holiday. The Chinese government expects more than 330 million people to travel during the week-long holiday marking the 57th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. AFP

Asean to stop criticizing Burma, says RP diplomat

THE 10-MEMBER ASSOCIATION OF South East Asian Nations (Asean) will not criticize Burma's (Myanmar) lack of progress towards democracy at an East Asian summit in December, a Philippine diplomat said on Wednesday.

For years, Asean has attempted without success to politely nudge Burma's ruling generals into following a democratic path and into freeing political prisoners through a policy of "constructive engagement."

In July, Malaysia used its role as the Asean chair to criticize Burma, but a senior foreign affairs' official in the Philippines, Asean's current chair, said the regional bloc can not do much to pressure the country to return to democracy.

"Asean does not work through arm twisting and political pressures as the Western countries want it," the diplomat, who requested anonymity, said.

"The Asean has already made policy statements on Myanmar for so long and whatever message we want to convey to the military leaders have already been made."

Junta chief Senior General Than Shwe will attend a meeting of Asean leaders and their counterparts from China, Japan, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand, known as the East Asia Summit, in the Philippines in December.

"There should be no problem with that because Myanmar is a member of Asean," said the diplomat.

The 73-year-old general skipped last year's summit in Kuala Lumpur. *Reuters*

UN set to choose new leader

UNITED NATIONS—THE UNITED NATIONS Security Council will meet next Monday to formally endorse South Korean Foreign Minister Ban Ki-Moon as its choice to become the next UN secretary general, its president said Tuesday.

Japan's UN Ambassador Kenzo Oshima, the council president for October, made the announcement as his Jordanian counterpart, Prince Zeid al-Hussein, informed him that he was pulling out of the race to succeed Kofi Annan as UN chief.

Prince Zeid, 42, extended his "warmest congratulations" to Ban, who Monday secured crucial backing from the council's five veto-wielding permanent members while decisively winning his fourth informal straw poll in a row.

"I wish Foreign Minister Ban the very best of success as he now prepares himself to meet the many challenges of tomorrow," the Jordanian envoy said in a letter to Oshima made available to reporters here.

On Monday, UN undersecretary general for communications and public information Shashi Tharoor of India, who placed second in the poll, conceded defeat and threw his support behind Ban, who is now virtually assured of becoming the eighth UN secretary general once Annan steps down in late December after 10 years in office.

Under the UN Charter, the secretary general is elected by the 192-member General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council. *AFP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Jeter boosts NY Yankees past Detroit in Game One /A25

SPORTS

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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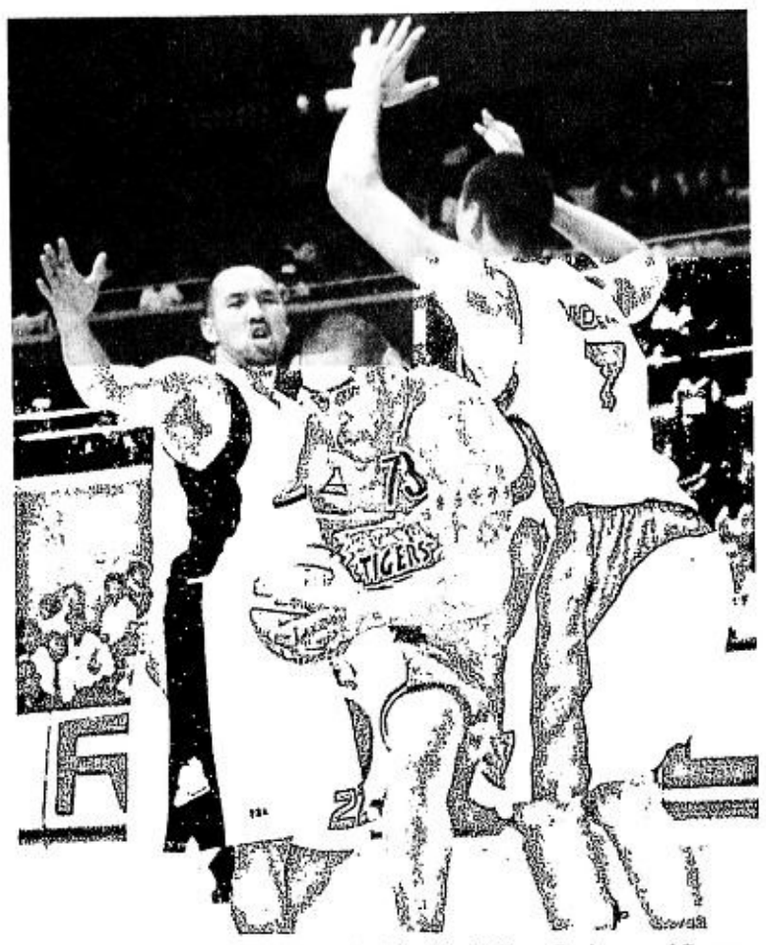
A new record has been set on just one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.



ALI Peek of Coca-Cola gets sandwiched by Jeffrey Cariaso and Sonny Thoss of Alaska in their game last night. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Aces clobber Tigers; Pals shellack Giants

By Musong R. Castillo

ADMITTING TO STILL BEING CONFIDENT DESPITE AN UGLY DEbut, the Alaska Aces virtually toyed with the Coca-Cola Tigers, 99-84, last night to get back on track in the eliminations of the PBA Philippine Cup.

Opening up hot and finishing with a flurry, the Aces built double digit leads early to run away with the win that partially erased the shock inflicted on them by Red Bull last week in Guam.

GAMES TOMORROW
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:35 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs. Air21
7:20 p.m.—Red Bull vs. San Miguel

"We played a little bit better tonight," coach Tim Cone said. "But it was not a great game by any means. After a loss like the one we came from, we'll take this one (victory) anytime."

The Aces took the Araneta Coliseum hardwood reeling from a 93-99 loss to the Bulls, which Cone said "really shook us up and had the organizers disappointed."

After winning the league's first-ever pre-season title with a five-game sweep, no one expected the Aces to take a tumble that bad, especially in the team's first game in a venue that was kind to them in the past.

So confident was Cone that he elected not to start Willie Miller, who still went on to shoot 26 markers and lead all Alaska shooters for the night. The former winner of the MVP award while with Red Bull also collared six rebounds, issued six feeds and stole three times.

"There's no reason for us not to be confident," Cone said. "Sometimes, wins you grind out are better than the pretty ones."

Talk 'N Text, which Alaska will face on Sunday, erected leads of as many as 23 points before turning back defending champion Purefoods, 108-99, in the nightcap.

Mike Cortez scored 12 of his 23 points in the first period, and the Aces ended the first 12 minutes sitting on a 29-22 bubble.

Alaska bloated this to 47-32 late in the second, and the scrappy

MILLER: Top scorer

Tigers actually fought to keep themselves in striking distance from thereon only to get bludgeoned by a barrage of baskets when they came too close for comfort.

The last time Coke was in the fight was after two Ali Peek baskets made it 69-75 with 9:20 to go. But the Aces reeled away for good as Miller hit six of his 12 fourth quarter points for an 85-71 lead.

The scores:

First Game

ALASKA 99—Miller 26, Cortez 23, Cariaso 17, Belasco 13, Ferriols 5, Dela Cruz 5, Luanzon 4, Laure 4, Thoss 2, Aban 0, Juinio 0.

COCA-COLA 84—Arigo 26, Peek 15, Enrile 9, Miranda 8, Antonio 8, Raneses 5, Salangsang 5, Yeo 4, Misolas 4, Rizada 0, Ferreria 0.

Quarters: 29-22, 49-36, 74-61, 99-84.

Second Game

TALK 'N TEXT 108—Carey 25, Washington 18, Ritualo 17, Taulava 13, Cardona 12, Alapag 11, Andaya 5, Belano 3, Allado 2, Pablo 2, Fran 0.

PUREFOODS 99—J. Yap 20, Simon 17, Raymundo 17, Limpot 14, Pingris 9, R. Yap 6, Yee, 6, Artadi 4, Castillo 4, Evangelista 2, Bautista 0, Salvador 0.

Quarters: 20-19, 50-30, 69-62, 108-99

SBP shifts focus on key position

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AFTER A LONG-DRAWN COURTship that ended with business tycoon Manny V. Pangilinan opening himself to the possibility of serving as president and chair of the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas (SBP), the new cage body has shifted its attention to another key position.

This time, the post of executive director is in the limelight as five names have reportedly been recommended to Pangilinan with the 25-man board of trustees of the SBP getting ready to elect its officers before convening the national congress on Oct. 10.

Sources said one side of the board of trustees is seeking a mutually acceptable agreement that will have Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) president Joey Lina sit as vice chair and Pilipinas Basketball (PB) head Bernie Atienza as executive director.

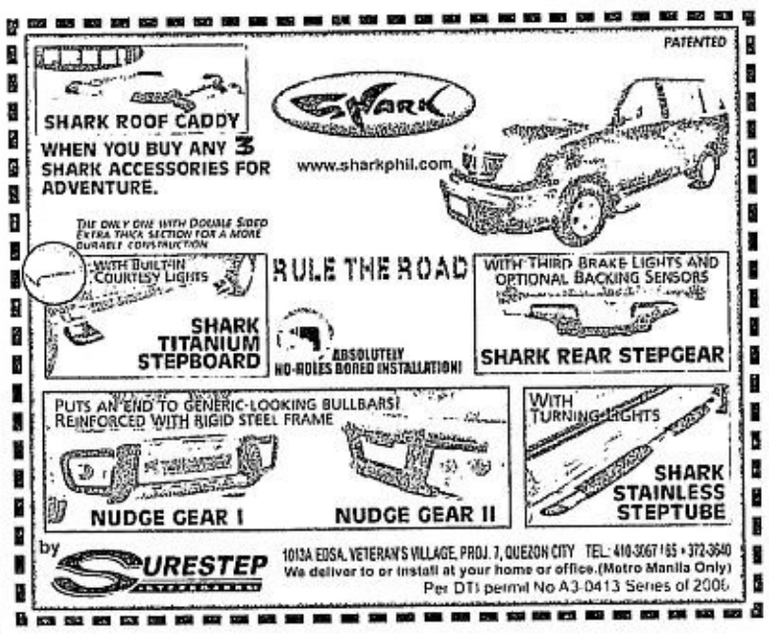
However, a source in the SBP revealed that five other names were floated as executive director candidates.

The list is made up of Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines head Chito Narvasa, UAAP commissioner Elmer Yanga, Talk 'N Text team manager Frankie Lim, former Ateneo and Crispa standout Fritz Gaston and former Toyota stalwart Ed Cordero.

BAP deputy secretary general Lito Alvarez of Air21, reportedly the source of the list, clarified in an interview with the INQUIRER that the names were floated because Pangilinan's trusted lieutenant, Ricky Vargas, wanted choices for a common candidate for executive director.

Atienza had earlier described as "reasonable enough" the possible choice of Lina as vice chair

SBP/ A24



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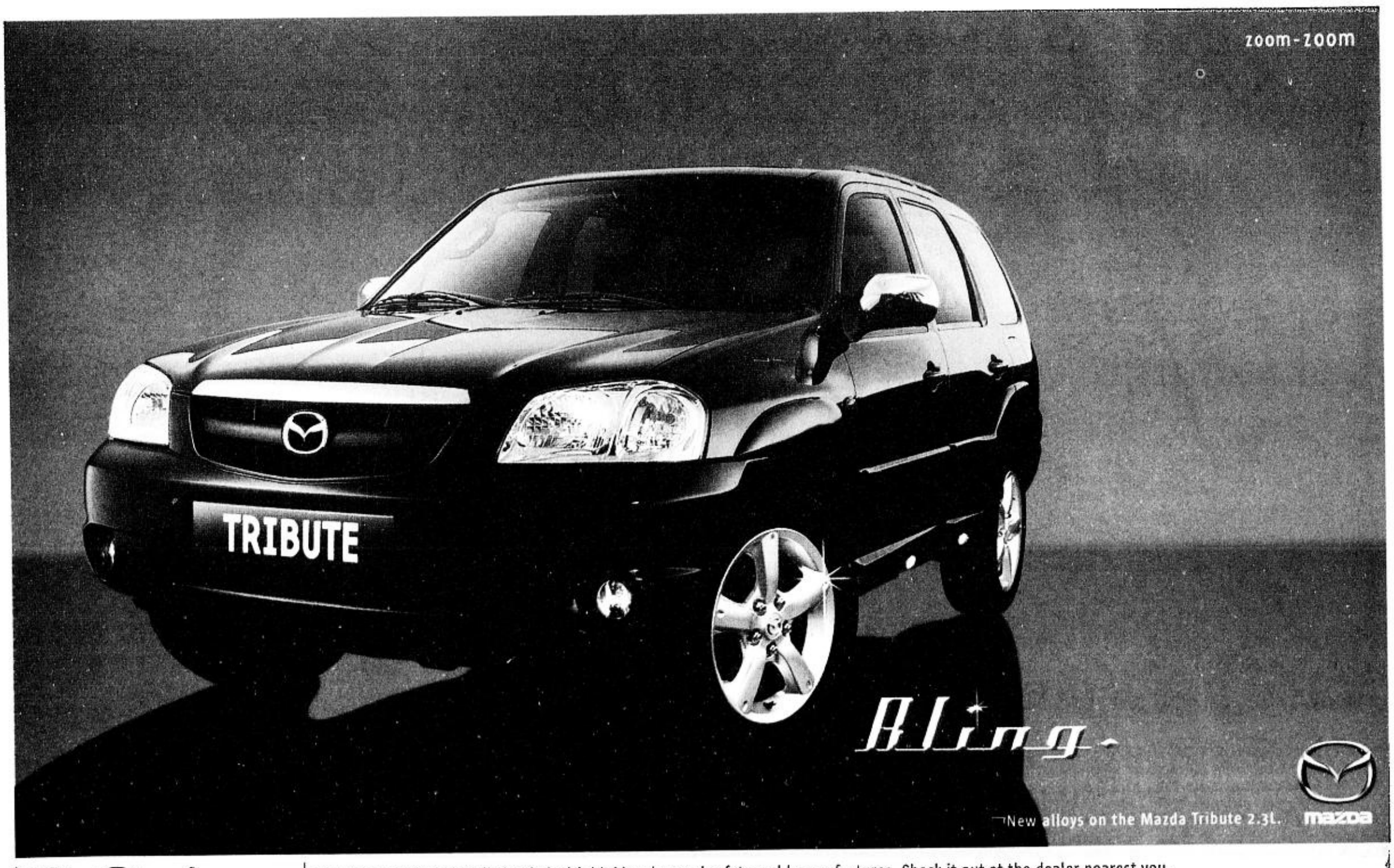

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Samsung Tour kicks off at Del Monte

SAN MIGUEL, BUKIDNON—THE battle for the last eight tickets to the grand finals gets going today as the challenging Del Monte Golf Club hosts the fifth and final eliminations leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour here.

The mainstays of the Del Monte squad—Joel Opaco, Tristan Tabanas, Yoyong Velez, Louie Dacudao and brothers Ben and Paul Miñoza banner the cast in the championship division which will be played over four days at the rolling layout.

The Miñozas are siblings of the country's foremost professional Frankie who is expected to be watching from the sidelines as he takes a break from his Japan Tour campaign.

Organizers received word yesterday that the members of the ICTSI pool led by Mike Bibat and Jay Bayron are doubtful starters but the Calatagan stable is coming in full force as well as jungolf sensation Tonton Asistio to challenge the Del Monte boys.

Tommy Manotoc is bringing his Calatagan team led by National Caddies Open standouts Jonel Ababa, Jessie Balasabas and brothers Joseph and Mario Labajo to Del Monte for another exposure trip.

This week's winner will join previous leg winners Marvin Dumandan (Royal Northwoods), Jun Bernis (Baguio Country Club), Gene Bondoc (Rancho Palos Verdes) and Ferdie Aunzo (Splendido Taal stop) in the finals at Mt. Malarayat next month.

The tourney is also backed by Taylor Made, C-Lium Fibre, Microtel, Titleist, Custom Clubmakers/KZG, Sunbolt. Media partners are Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and Solar Sports Plus

SBP shifts focus... From page A23

and he as executive director.

Sources said the BAP had initiated the submission of a short list for executive director, who will be the group's "work horse" and represent the SBP in the Philippine Olympic Committee.

The SBP's constitution and bylaws have been approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission and is waiting for the national congress to convene to gain Fiba sanction.

But Atienza admitted that selecting which member clubs are qualified for the national congress will take some time as BAP has far more accredited member leagues of 61 compared to PB's 21.

This, said Atienza, has prompted the group to go through a transition period until April 2008 to sort things out. But for the meantime, he said, the 25-man board will run the SBP with the set of officers as implementers of plans of action.

H. Centre, N. Cotabato fives hurdle NBC rivals

DEBUTING BACCHUS/HARBOUR CENTRE San Juan and North Cotabato scored lopsided victories Tuesday in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament.

The San Juan cagers of businessman Mikee Romero and Mayor JV Ejercito gave a rude welcome to new member Cellular Pawnshop by cruising to a 71-52 win at the San Juan gym.

Over at the capitol gym in Kidapawan City, Gov. Manny Piñol's North Cotabato Braves whipped another first-timer, Montana Pawnshop-Davao, 79-68, to level their record at 2-2.

Hot-shooting Henry Fernandez and Angelus Raymundo combined for 32 points to propel the Braves to victory after their heart-rending 61-64 setback to Tribu Sugbu last Saturday.

With ex-pro Tonyboy Espinosa's superb quarterbacking, the Braves raced to a 24-16 first quarter lead and never looked back.

Businessman Armando Quibod's Jewelers came to within seven at the break, 31-38, but the Braves exploded with 26 points in the third period to pull away, 64-61.

Bacchus/Harbour banked on old reliable Ronjay Buenafe and new recruit Robert Sanz to take control of its game with Cellular Pawnshop, 41-29, at halftime.

Action returns to the San Juan gym today with Bacchus/Harbour testing unbeaten Tagaytay Spring at 5 p.m. in the tourney supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Nature's Spring, Molten, Holiday Plaza Hotel-Cebu and Prime Channel.

The scores:

SAN JUAN 71—Buenafe 18, Sanz 17, Coyukang 7, Pribdhas 7, Gamboa 6, Aquino 5, Masbang 4, Sta. Cruz 3, Retaga 2, Alminario 2, Williams 0, Reroma 0.

CELLULAR 52—Salud 11, Taligatos 8, Aquino 5, Lopez 5, Aclon 5, Aclon 5, Balares 4, Ober 3, Go 3, Dulay 2, Tingson 2, Kalaw 2, Codamon 2, Ico 0, Dela Rea 0, Cortez 0.

Quarters: 19-11, 41-29, 54-43, 71-52.

NORTH COTABATO 79—Fernandez 18, Raymundo 14, Espinosa 12, Ligue 11, Manalac 9, Cabanog 3, Tamayo 3, Allado 3, Martinez 2, Etrata 0, Dagatan 0.

MONTANA 68—Jatico 12, Gonzaga 11, Ayson 11, Atablanco 10, Abanis 8, Quibod 5, Dawala 5, Daja 4, Bajenting 2, Bonifacio 0, Cachuela 0, Edrinal 0.

Quarters: 24-16, 38-31, 64-61, 79-68.

WINNER: Japanese second seed Ai Sugiyama hits a return against Finland's Laine Emma at the Japanese Open tennis tournament in Tokyo Wednesday. Sugiyama won, 6-4, 6-3. AFP

Germans top rivals of RP bets–Puyat

AS FAR AS ARISTEO "PUTCH" PUYAT IS CONCERNED, GERMANY will be fielding the toughest contingent in the 2006 World Pool Championship the country will be hosting Nov. 4-12 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

"I think the Germans will be our biggest rivals," said the acknowledged billiards godfather and longtime benefactor of Hall of Famer and 1999 WPC winner Efren "Bata" Reyes, former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Filipino-Canadian Alex Pagulayan, the 2004 WPC champion.

"We should also expect good performances from the Chinese-Taipei bets and entries from the US and other European countries," Puyat added.

Germany, a rising power in world pool, has nine WPC entries led by former world champions Thorsten Hohmann (2003), Ralph Souquet (1996) and Oliver Ortmann (1995).

Hohmann, a frequent Manila visitor, beat 2005 Taiwan World Pool semifinalist Marlon Manalo in the finals of the 2006 North American International Pool Tour (IPT) 8-ball championship last July in Las Vegas to pocket the $350,000 top prize.

Other German bets are Thomas Engert, a former Champions of Champions winner; Andreas Roschkowsky, Christian Reimering, Jorn Kaplan, Sven Pauristch and Michael Schmidt.

A total of 117 players representing 42 countries have already qualified for the main draw of the WPC according to Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP) chair and Raja Sports president Yen Macabenta.

The Americans have the biggest entries of 13 players led by Earl Strickland (2002 champion), Johnny Archer (five-time world champion) and Rodney Morris, who was beaten by Reyes in their duel for the record $500,000 first prize in the finals of the World IPT championship last month.

Chinese-Taipei and Philippines have 12 players each in the main draw.

Reigning World Pool titlist Wu Chia-ching, 2000 winner Chao Fong-pang and last year's Asian 9-ball tour overall winner Shun Yang-ching will lead the Taiwanese.

This year's edition will also be notable for the participation of players from countries previously not represented in the tournament like China and France. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Zambo hosts Milo Marathon

THE MILO MARATHON FINALLY VISITS Western Mindanao when it holds elimination races in Zamboanga City on Sunday and in Dipolog City on Nov. 12.

The race in the City of Flowers is expected to draw 5,000 runners in the 21K qualifying race, 5K fun run and the 3K event for children 12 years old and below.

The top 10 finishers in all three events will receive trophies, medals and cash prizes amounting to P159,600. Milo jackets, caps, basketballs and a cell phone will also be raffled off to the public on race day.

Mayor Celso L. Lobregat has been invited by local organizer Pedro Alfaro to fire the starting gun at 6 a.m. at the Joaquin Enriquez Sports Complex.

This Sunday's festivities also include an inter-school cheer-dance competition, the inter-school running competition and the biggest delegation contest.

The Milo Marathon national finals, held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, Cebu Pacific, Department of Tourism and Powerbar is slated on Dec. 10 in Metro Manila.

Meanwhile, Milo Marathon sports executive Pat Goc-ong and national race director Rudy Biscocho, are still studying when the Legazpi City leg will be reset.

Last Sunday's race slated in Legazpi was postponed due to the devastation left by super typhoon "Milenyo."

The 30th season of the Milo Marathon holds 30 legs all in key cities all over the archipelago.

SPORTSWATCH

Basco, Barte down tennis rivals

UNRANKED MICHAEL BASCO AND QUALIFIER RALPH KEVIN BARTE DOWNED separate rivals yesterday at the start of the 2006 Abalos Cup Men's Open tennis tournament at the NCMH outdoor courts in Mandaluyong City. Basco ousted fifth seed Gilbert Estrada, 7-6 (4), 6-2, to forge a second-round showdown with Bong Gregorio, who scored a 6-1, 6-2 victory over wild card Alberto Villamor. Barte, on the other hand, prevailed over fellow qualifier Roland Kraut, 6-0, 6-3, to advance against top seed Johnny Arcilla, who won by default over Jaime Solon. Second seed Rolando Ruel Jr., third seed Alexander Lazaro, Elbert Anasta, Yannick Guba, Pablo Olivarez II and Arvin Ruel also earned second-round berths.

Bata exhibition at Fontana

NATIONAL BILLIARDS HERO Efren "Bata" Reyes will play exhibition matches on Saturday at the Fontana Leisure Parks in Clark Field, Pampanga, to spice up the resort's Capampangan Food Festival. Reyes, recently crowned World Open 8-ball champion, agreed to play as his way of thanking his supporters and cabalens.

LPC cockfest stakes P250,000 today

A GUARANTEED PRIZE OF P250,000 AWAITS THE WINNERS IN THE FASTEST Win-One Cock Ulutan beginning at 9 a.m. today at Las Piñas Coliseum. Hosts Big Boy and Rudy Sayaman said that the fastest win champion will be chosen after every five fights and will get P10,000. Likewise, each winner will get a bonus of P1,500. The overall fastest win champion will receive P20,000; second P15,000 and third, P10,000. The Arki Fastest Win Super Ulutan comes next on Oct. 12 with Ronnie dela Cruz as host. Up for grabs is P130,000.

New breeders support Labanan stagfest

NEW AND UPCOMING GAMEFOWL BREEDERS GIRD UP FOR BATTLE MONDAY when the first-ever No Entry Fee Labanan 7-stag derby series fires off at San Juan Coliseum. No less than P1.3 million await the winners in the Metro Manila leg, according to Patrick Antonio who conceptualized this unique format, where new breeders are given the chance to showcase their battlecrosses with minimal risk involved. A participant may join the 3-stag eliminations by presenting P1,000 proof of purchase of any Sagupaan products. For Metro Manila, the eliminations are lined up at San Juan Coliseum (Oct. 9 and 16), Pasig Square Garden (Oct. 15), Pasay City Cockpit (Oct. 20) and Oct. 24 (Araneta Coliseum). Qualifiers will face one another for the title on Oct. 26 at Araneta Coliseum. For info, call 0916-4763030 (Ariel) or 0917-8064758 (Neil).

Roligon 5-stag derby set Oct. 14

ANOTHER PRIZE-RICH STAGFEST SIZZLES AT ROLIGON MEGA COCKPIT ON Oct. 14, 16 and 18 via the Diamante Brothers 5-stag derby, offering a guaranteed prize of P1 million for an entry fee of P7,700. Three brand new motorcycles will be given away as bonus for fastest win champions in each day of competition. This event comes on the heels of Roligon's Stag Festival 5-stag derby recently, where three participants emerged as co-champions: Michael Faltado (Full Blast Euro), D. Arcenas (BAA Farms) and Erwin Maligaya (Mutya). Screening of stags for the derby is now ongoing and interested parties may call 0915-2147845; 0919-8207788 (Leddy) or 851-2275. Stags with "Stag Festival" wingbands are accepted.

Wilcon, GNC post second victories

WILCON BUILDERS DEPOT AND GNC routed separate rivals Saturday to pace the Pilipinas Kong Mahal Division of the Burlington-Philippine Advocacy League basketball tournament at the San Andres gym.

The WBD cagers routed Office of the Solicitor General, 157-59, while GNC whipped Burlington Bio-Fresh, 87-66, for their second straight victories in as many outings.

In the Bantay Bata division, MB Hotshots won by default over the PBA Press Corps for a 2-0 record and the solo lead while Philippine Star beat Wilcon Builders Supply, 74-68.

Filipino darters hit bulls-eye

THE PHILIPPINE DARTS TEAM WON THE gold in the recent 13th Asia-Pacific Cup 2006 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Team Philippines beat defending champion New Zealand in the semifinals and trounced Malaysia in the finals.

Team Philippines is composed of Lourence Ilagan (from Cainta, Rizal), Bobby Concepcion (Manila), Arvee Briones (Baguio City), Jojo Balleriano (Davao City), Rose Noble (Makati City) and Annaliza Awitan (Cagayan de Oro City).

Other countries which took part are Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Brunei-Darusalam, India, Pakistan and Iran.

Team Philippines was supported by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., honorary chair of the Darts Council of the Philippines, Senate President Manny Villar, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada and Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair Butch Ramirez of the Philippine Sports Commission, Putch Puyat, Datuk Amirkahar Tun Mustapha (chair, Yayasan Bumiputra Sabah), Eduard Kho, (CEO, Leroy International-Malaysia), Grace Sevilla of Leroy Phils., Teody Principe of Balfour Beatty (England), lawyer Ed Escueta, Nick Lagmay of PGA Cars, lawyer Felipe Remollo, Alberto Santillana (chair and CEO, SV More Pharma), Agustin Ang, Ricardo Balbido, president and CEO Veterans Bank.

Jackson injury boosts Sy's AF3 chances

ALI JACKSON

FORMER ASIAN FORMULA THREE series leader Ali Jackson sustained multiple broken bones in his right hand in a vehicular accident in his native Ireland last week and is a doubtful starter in the last four rounds of the circuit on Nov. 4-5 at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Asian Formula Three Corp. chair Ed Peña, quoting Noel Thompson, owner of the Aran Racing Team led by Jackson, said a jeep being driven by Jackson in a farm near Dublin turned turtle, throwing the 17-year-old speedster out of the vehicle.

Jackson was rushed to a nearby hospital where he was operated on, according to Peña, quoting Jackson's father, Alistair Sr. Jackson's right hand will be in a cast for about four to five weeks, and he will need ample time after that to rehabilitate his injured hand.

A steel pin was placed in Jackson's hand to stabilize his injury and speed up healing, according to Peña.

This development practically rules Jackson out of Rounds 15-18 set at the tricky BRC track and leaves Briton James Winslow of JA Motorsport, the new series leader, and Filipino Tyson Sy of Speedtech Asia, currently in third, to dispute the crown.

"We're sorry to hear what happened to Ali," said Peña. "We're hoping he's okay. But there's a 99 percent probability that he won't be able to race in Batangas."

Anton posts double in Guam Motocross

GUAM—MULTITITLED NATIONAL racing champion Carlos Anton beating Guam's top drivers and brought home the crowns in the Street Modified class and Stock classes recently in the Guam Road Racers Association (GRRA) Autocross Gymkhana.

Anton defended his Street Modified title against Guam series champion Adrian Banu and later copped the Stock class against another Guam champion Vladimir Navasca.

"I'm very happy we made it two for two for the Philippines in Guam," said Anton. "It was much closer this time but we still managed to come out on top although the US boys are getting quicker."

Banu, parading a fully prepared Honda Prelude with slick tires, gave Anton the hardest time as they swapped fastest times all day until Anton stamped his victory with the day's fastest time of 45.653 seconds using a Lancer Evolution 8.

It was just a few ticks ahead of Banu who came in second with a time of 46.626. Jay Sevilla took third, registering 47.489 seconds aboard his Subaru STI.

Later, Anton won the Stock class using a Nissan-sponsored Sentra SE-R that upstaged Navasca on a Nissan Sentra. It was the second successful international stint for Anton who also represented the Country in the Asia Zone Autocross Championships. in Indonesia where he finished 11th out of 32 bets.

BAGUIO-NATIVE Carlos Anton delivers a double title feat for the Philippines as he steers the Evolution 8 to victory.

Jeter boosts NY Yankees

Athletics, Cardinals strike crucial first blow as Major League playoffs get going

NEW YORK—THE NEW YORK YANKEES, OAKLAND ATHletics and St. Louis Cardinals struck the first blow in their division series on Tuesday, as some of baseball's most feared sluggers opened the post-season with a bang.

Frank Thomas (Oakland), Albert Pujols (St. Louis), Jason Giambi and Derek Jeter (both New York) all homered to help their teams to victory, while Oakland's Barry Zito delivered a classic performance from the mound to outduel Johan Santana in Minnesota.

In the Bronx, Giambi had a two-run blast and Jeter went five-for-five, capping a spectacular night with a solo homer, as the Yankees beat the Detroit Tigers 8-4.

The Tigers limped into the post-season mired in a five game losing streak and the Yankees showed no mercy, pounding out 14 hits to secure a 1-0 lead in their American League best-of-five division series.

"It was just one of those days, they don't happen very often in the regular season or post-season," said Jeter. "In a short series you can't relax, you want to win the first game at home.

"It was a big win but it means absolutely nothing unless we win tomorrow."

Yankees starter Wang Chien-Ming, who won 19 games in the regular season, went 6 2/3 innings to earn the win before Mariano Rivera finished off the Tigers in the ninth.

In San Diego, Pujols broke open a scoreless contest in the fourth inning when he smashed a two-run homer off Padres starter Jake Peavy as the Cardinals beat the Padres 5-1.

"It was game changing," said Peavy. "You can't give Albert second chances because he's going to hurt you."

The Cardinals would add another run in the fourth and pushed across runs in the fifth and sixth to give Chris Carpenter a 5-0 cushion. That would be more than enough for the lefthander and the Cards took Game One of the NL division series.

In Minneapolis, Thomas homered to open the scoring in the second inning then connected on a solo shot to deep left in the ninth to clinch a Game One win for the AL West division champions in front of a disappointed capacity crowd of 55,542 at the Metrodome.

The 38-year-old slugger became the oldest player to have a multi-homer game in Major League post-season history.

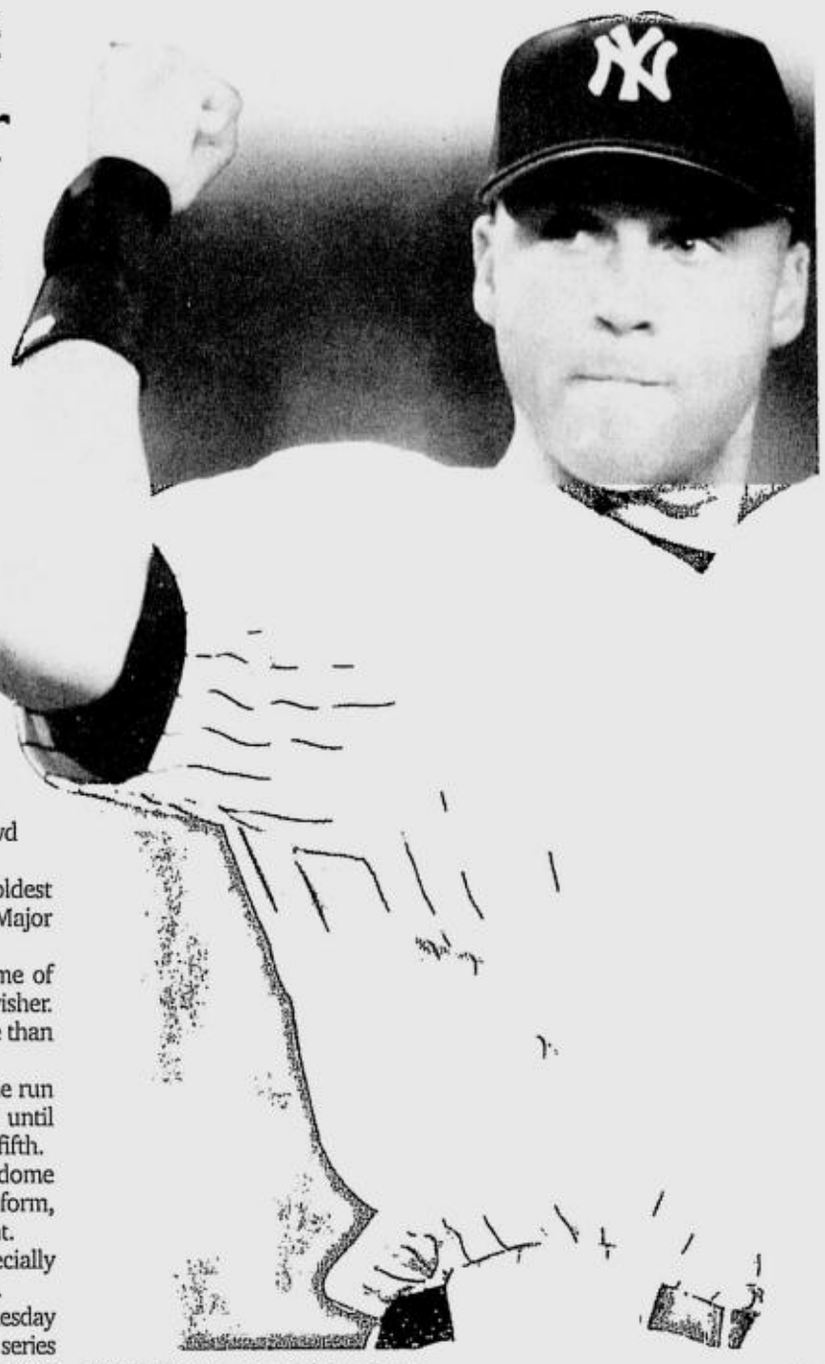
"Like I said, big-timers show up this time of year," said Oakland first baseman Nick Swisher. "And it doesn't really get any more big-time than Frank Thomas."

Oakland starter Zito surrendered just one run on four hits and did not allow his first hit until Rondell White doubled with two out in the fifth.

Santana, who had not lost at the Metrodome in his last 23 starts, was also in superb form, yielding two runs, five hits and striking eight.

"First blood, I think, means a lot. Especially when you're playing on the road," said Zito.

Post-season action continues on Wednesday with the Mets opening up their best-of-five series at home against the Los Angeles Dodgers. *Reuters*



JETER: It was one of those days. AFP

Angels in the hardcourt 2?

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

THE TEXT INVITE didn't say exactly what the contract signing was all about, but it did mention that Orville Roque and Heny Fabian, president and vice president of The Astra Group, respectively, were counting on our presence during the affair at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

On that basis, and because the venue was not too far away, I decided to go. I knew, though, that I would probably be the only one from the sports media in the press conference scheduled at 8 a.m. which is considered an unholy hour by most of my colleagues.

***

The contract signing, I learned from the Sulo Hotel front desk, would be done during the Kapihan sa Sulo, a weekly media forum spearheaded by NBN-4 chair Cerge Remonde.

The contract was already being signed by all parties involved when I got there. It was a partnership between NBN-4 and The Astra Group, distributor of Extreme Magic Sing, for the forthcoming Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

"Astra would provide the fuel for the project to go into full gear," said NBN-4 general manager Joey Isabelo, one of the signatories.

The way I understood it, Astra would guarantee funding for the television coverage of the Asiad.

"It will be a co-production," said Orville and Heny, the inseparable Astra duo.

***

I was very, very impressed, awed in fact. I didn't know Astra was that big-time in the league of giants like San Miguel Corp. and PLDT, traditional sponsors of sporting events of this magnitude.

Orville and Heny modestly brushed off my compliments.

They said they were just sports lovers helping the cause if they can.

Joey Isabelo confirmed the statement. He said Astra had already bailed him out a few times in the past.

***

I was trying to call UAAP champion coach Pido Jarencio all day yesterday for a brief interview, although all there was to write about him and the championship had already been written in the last three days.

I wanted to ask Pido of a clear account of how UST Tiger John Lee Apil had died last summer in an accident.

I was told that the cager had sacrificed his life trying to save two youths who were drowning.

The boys were saved, I was told, but John Lee died in the process.

***

When this happened, the UST "fourpeat" in the early '90s came to fore. Even I was reminded of a front page feature we had in a sports magazine titled "Angels in the Hardcourt." At that time, people were inclined to believe that then coach Aric del Rosario and the Tigers were getting help from supernatural forces, spirits of people who had once been involved in the team like the late team manager Boy Ascue.

There were two or three other spirit helpers, but I couldn't remember them offhand.

As related to me by one of the scribes, Tiger Dylan Ababou had a premonition that something extraordinary was going to happen to UST this season after John Lee joined the other angels last summer.

"*Dadami na raw ang kakampi sa itaas*," he said.

Spoken like an angel. Was it coincidence or could there be some basis of truth to the belief that there are angels in the hardcourt helping the UST Tigers?

More angels, in fact, than Aric del Rosario's team of 1995.

Lakers start training minus Phil, Kobe

KOBE Bryant (left), wearing a new jersey number, chats with Los Angeles Lakers coach Phil Jackson during a photo shoot. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—THE LOS ANGELES LAKers began official training for the 2006-07 season on Tuesday without the full impact of two familiar faces in head coach Phil Jackson and top player Kobe Bryant.

The 61-year-old Jackson is having surgery to replace his right hip while Lakers guard Bryant, recovering from an operation on his right knee, is not yet at full strength.

Jackson, scheduled to be released from the Centinela Hospital Medical Center on Wednesday, expects to be back in charge before the season starts on Oct. 31.

"Dr. (Lawrence) Dorr, who's doing the procedure, says I'll be walking with pride at the opening night against Phoenix," Jackson told reporters at the team's El Segundo training facility.

The Lakers launch their NBA season with a home game against the Phoenix Suns on Oct. 31.

Jackson, who has walked with a limp for some time, decided to have his hip replaced "sooner rather than later" after he suffered increasing pain during the offseason at his home in Montana.

"The pain got debilitating this summer," he said. "I could only exercise through swimming.

"I felt, in the best interests of our team, it would be better to have surgery sooner rather than later."

Jackson, who played 12 seasons for the New York Knicks, has guided teams to a record-equaling nine NBA Championships, including three in a row with the Lakers from 2000-2002.

Bryant, who had arthroscopic surgery on July 13, expects to be fit for the season-opener against Phoenix.

"The knee's doing pretty good and I have just started some light running," he said. "It's right on schedule.

Asked if he would be ready for the season-opener on Oct. 31, Bryant replied: "I should be, hopefully."

The Lakers play their first pre-season game against Utah Jazz in Fresno, California next Tuesday. *Reuters*

All set for Battle of the Courts

DEFENDING CHAMPION CENTRO Atletico opens defense of its crown when it leads 10 teams competing for four finals slots in the first eliminations leg of the Battle of the Courts: The Interclub Badminton Championships at the Playground courts in Las Piñas this weekend.

Centro Atletico is fielding the same lineup that wrested the title from The Zone last year in the tourney presented by Rush Fitness Water, Mizuno Badminton and Inquirer Badminton.

They are Howard Vitas, Jofer Velez, Dan Astillero, Marife Durana, Beth Pulido, Gina Flores and Emi Jorge. The team is coached by Badong Banquiles with Luigi Abad Santos as team manager.

Centro is in Group 2 with Playground, Biñan Crosscourt, Alabang Racquet Club and Badminton Sports Center.

Group I is made up of The Palms, Myan's, Badminton Buddies, Peregrine and Philippine National Police which looms as this year's team to watch.

The top two teams in each group will automatically qualify for the grand finals but they will still fight it out for the seedings and the leg title.

The Battle of the Courts is also sponsored by Duty Free Philippines, BSI medicated spray, Unilever and Gerflor Taraflex as the official mat. Radio partners are Wave 89.1 and 92.3 Joey.

From Playground, the Battle moves to Club 650 for the second leg on Oct. 14-15 and then to Las Pinas Badminton Center on Oct. 28-29 with 11 teams participating in each leg.

Mindworks is the organizing team for this year's Battle which features club players of top clubs in Metro Manila and the provinces.

SHAQUILLE O'Neal tries to come to grips with the new ball. REUTERS

Domingo fails WBF title bid

PHILIPPINE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPION Michael Domingo failed in his attempt to become the country's only world title holder when he suffered a ninth-round knockout defeat at the hands of Frenchman Frederic Patrac early morning yesterday at the 3,000-capacity Palais Des Sports in Agde, France.

The match was for the World Boxing Federation bantamweight crown.

The 28-year-old French champion was simply too much for Domingo, according to reports coming out of France, as Patrac put on "an excellent performance as he outfought and outboxed Domingo but never seemed to hurt him," according to boxing writer Wolfgang Schiffbauer, as quoted by Philboxing.com.

"Domingo was hit by an uppercut and was counted out," Cebuano sportsman Antonio L. Aldeguer told the INQUIRER.

Sammy Gello-ani, who accompanied Domingo together with trainer Edmund Villamor, said Patrac "fought like a wounded lion all throughout." *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

'League-less' Lady Archers find playground down south

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SUSPENDED LA SALLE WOMEN'S basketball team sure knows how to put its free time into good use.

Left inactive by the suspension slapped on the school by the UAAP, the Lady Archers embarked on a goodwill tour down south recently, facing Mindanao-based schools in a series of friendly matches at the Mindanao Civic Center in Tubod, Lanao de Norte.

The friendly matches, ironically, resulted in routs given the strength and experience of the UAAP powerhouse squad.

The Lady Archers demolished Pagadian City College (133-26) before taking on Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (95-35).

They were set to face one more team from Cagayan de Oro, but the school begged off because of conflicts of schedule with its intramural games.

"We hope that this would start the exchange of athletic knowledge between Metro Manila and Mindanao, not only in basketball but in all sports as well," said Provincial Gov. Imelda Quibranza-Dimaporo.

Her daughter, Sittie Aminah, is one of the stalwarts of the La Salle Lady Archers and the major proponent of the team's Mindanao swing.

Edna Gloriani, La Salle team manager said, lauded the efforts to bring the top UAAP team in Region 10 while the school waits for the lifting of their one-year suspension from the league as a result of the ineligibility row caused by the men's team early this year.

"This series has given us the chance to play the best the country could offer, and though we lost the game, we learn something just by playing with La Salle," said PCC president Ricardo Santiago, himself a former La Salle student in Manila.

The UAAP suspended La Salle after the school admitted that it inadvertently fielded in an ineligible player for two years, including in 2004 when the team won the championship.

New ball ok, insists NBA

NEW YORK—SOME OF THE NBA'S BIGGEST stars say the new game ball is too sticky when dry, too slippery when wet, and too—well, not the old one.

The league is convinced it's better, no matter what the likes of Shaquille O'Neal, Dwyane Wade or Steve Nash have to say about it.

"Sure, you hear some comments that aren't as positive as the overwhelming majority of people that we tested the ball with," Stu Jackson, executive vice president of basketball operations, said Tuesday. "That's going to happen. Everyone that handles the ball loves the grip and the feel of the ball."

Not Shaq, who said the ball "feels like one of those cheap balls that you buy at the toy store, indoor-outdoor balls."

The NBA's old leather balls are being replaced this season by a microfiber composite model, the league's first change in 35 years. *AP*

SPORTS

Gonzales bounces back

FILIPINO INTERNATIONAL master Jayson Gonzales bounced back in contention by besting local ace Matias Ruiz Vinals in the fourth round of the 19th International Chess Open Es Vermar Tuesday in Mallorca, Spain.

Handling white, Gonzales prevailed after 35 moves of a Slav Defense and climbed to 3.0 points. Gonzales' bid for his third and final grandmaster result, however, got a big blow following the withdrawal of Czechoslovakian GM Tomas Oral.

In a text message, Gonzales said Oral felt dismal since he was billeted only at a 2-star hotel while some players, including Gonzales, were billeted in a 4-star hotel.

According to Gonzales, Oral's withdrawal pulled down the event's average rating and he now needs to sweep his last five games to entertain any hope of gaining a GM result.

Gonzales shares 9th to 18th places with fifth round opponent FM Falko Meyer of Germany. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

Gomez bows to Chinese GM

FILIPINO NATIONAL MASTER John Paul Gomez suffered a heart-breaking loss via time forfeit against top seed Grandmaster Wang Yue of China at the start of the 2006 World Junior Boys and Girls Chess Championship at the Petrosian Chess House in Yerevan, Armenia.

With one minute left on his clock, Gomez blundered on his 34th move, moving his knight from e6 to f4 attacking the rook of his Chinese foe in the d3 square. Wang is ranked No. 2 in China with an Elo rating of 2644. NM Marlon Bernardino

Fearless Fighting qualifying Saturday

THE THIRD qualifying stage of the Fearless Fighting Championship will be held at 7:30 p.m. this Saturday at the Metrowalk in Pasig City. Alex Lopez, president of Fearless Promotions, Inc. which is organizing the event, said Fearless Fighting features exciting bouts between proponents of varied martial arts.

Champs League opens today

By Jasmine W. Payo

TOP VARSITY ACTION CONTINUES AS the country's leading teams display their wares in the "Sweet 16" of the Collegiate Champions League starting today at the Emilio Aguinaldo College Gym.

The University of the East Warriors, seeded fifth in the tournament that pits 16 schools in a knockout-style contest, will take on the Emilio Aguinaldo College Generals at 4 p.m.

"We took a 10-day break after the UAAP, so we expect a more prepared EAC team," said UE coach Dindo Pumaren of the Generals, who were ranked 12th after bagging the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (UCAA) title.

GAMES TODAY
(EAC Gym)
2 p.m.—St. Francis vs Mapua
4 p.m.—UE vs EAC

The eighth-seeded Mapua Cardinals, who finished fourth in the NCAA, will battle the St. Francis of Assisi Doves at 2 p.m.

Ranked ninth, the Doves captured the title in the National Capital Region Athletic Association (NCRAA).

Although the Warriors bowed to newly crowned UAAP champion Santo Tomas Tigers in the Final Four, Pumaren said his Warriors remain upbeat.

"Even if we practiced only for three days, we always try to do well in every competition that we join," said Pumaren, who will be missing the services of top gunner Bonbon Custodio in the league.

School officials suspended Custodio in his final UAAP game as a "disciplinary measure."

The Warriors, though, remain among the favorites with Marcy Arellano, Mark Borboran, Elmer Espiritu and Kelvin Gregorio.

The Ateneo Blue Eagles, the UAAP runners-up, earned the No.1 seed after topping the tournament criteria that included the team's winning record and team composition.

NCAA champion San Beda Lions claimed the second spot, while the Tigers secured the No. 3 seed. The PCU, who lost to Red Lions in the NCAA Finals, were ranked fourth.

On the green

STA LUCIA GOLF TOUR 2006

MINDANAO LEG
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GOLF & RESIDENTIAL ESTATES
DAVAO CITY

240 players
60 competing teams
12 playing days
8 member clubs
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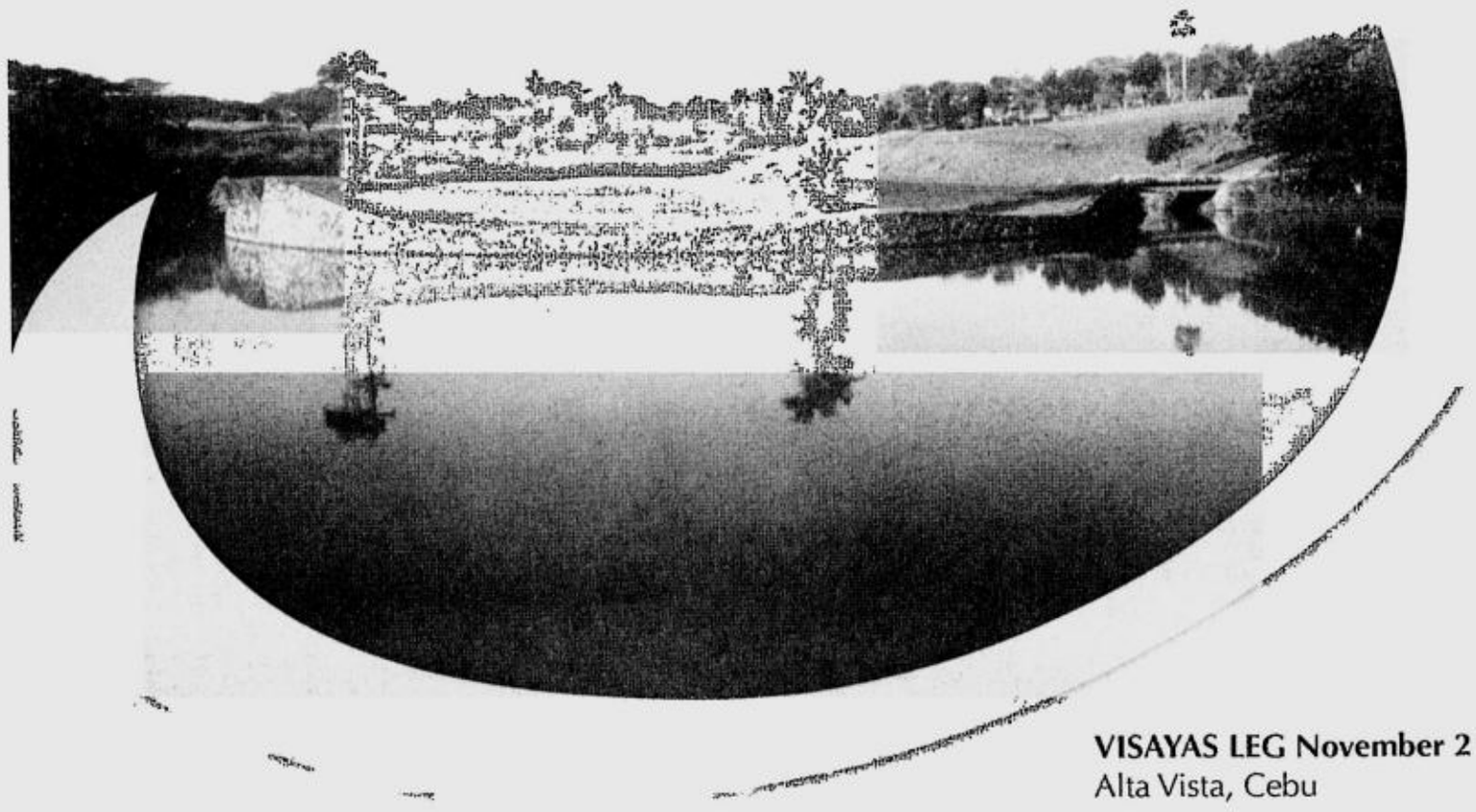
3 nationwide legs
1 championship



VISAYAS LEG November 2 to 5, 2006
Alta Vista, Cebu

LUZON LEG December 7 to 10, 2006
Summit Point, Batangas
Orchard, Cavite (Player course)
Eagle Ridge, Cavite (Faldo course)

Rancho Palos Verdes plays host to 1st leg of Sta. Lucia Tour

Now on its 7th year, Sta. Lucia Realty Development Corporation will hold its annual members' golf tournament through **Sta. Lucia Golf Tour '06**, believed to be one of the biggest golf tournaments in the country today.

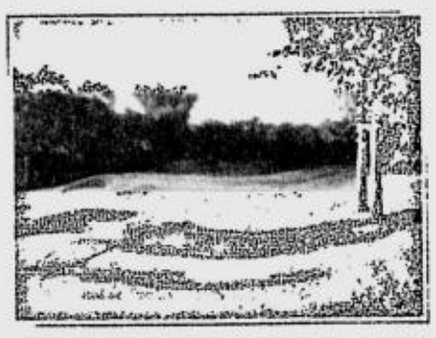
Sta. Lucia's Rancho Palos Verdes Golf and Country Club in Davao will play host for the first leg where 240 players will participate in this year's tournament. Rancho Palos Verdes is the only all-weather, 18-hole championship golf course in Davao City today. A masterpiece of world-class golf course designer Andy Dye, it was created to transcend the boundaries of art and sports into the technologies of nature and environment.

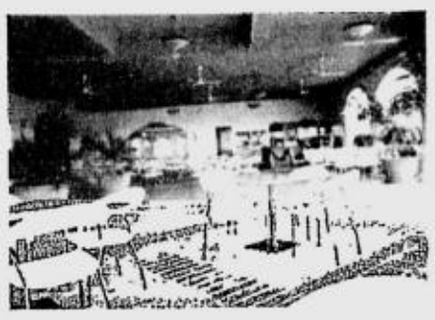
The course is set in 71 hectares of elevated, undulating terrain, overlooking a vast banana plantation meandering along the banks of Davao River. Remainders of a tropical rainforest traverses the first four holes, coupled with a crocodile lagoon, an early morning view of Mount Talomo, and a bird sanctuary...finishing with the course's most difficult hole, the 475 yard, par 4, 9 Here is where bets are often won or lost.

On October 5, players will be given a day to practice on its driving range and fairways The Clubhouse's facilities include a full service restaurant, male and female lockers and showers, sauna, jacuzzi and massage room, pro shop, fitness club, golfer's lounge and bar. Members also get to enjoy other facilities like covered tennis courts, basketball courts, billiard halls, bowling lanes, swimming pool, and game rooms.

Rancho Palos Verdes Golf & Country Club, brings harmony to nature and the golfer at the same time. After the first leg, the players will be taken to Alta Vista in Cebu on November 2-5 (2nd leg), and finally to Luzon on December 7-10 (3rd leg) where players get another round of exciting games in Summit Point, Orchard and Eagle Ridge to complete the 3-month nationwide golf tourney.

For inquiries on Rancho Palos Verdes, please call Orchard Property Marketing Corporation at 6365884 to 85, (082) 3012100 02 or visit www.palosverdesdavao.com.





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Hole-in-One — Titleist, FOOTJOY, PLATONIC
Official Airline — Philippine Airlines

ADVT.

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■ 2006 inflation seen at 6.6% /B6

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BUSINESS

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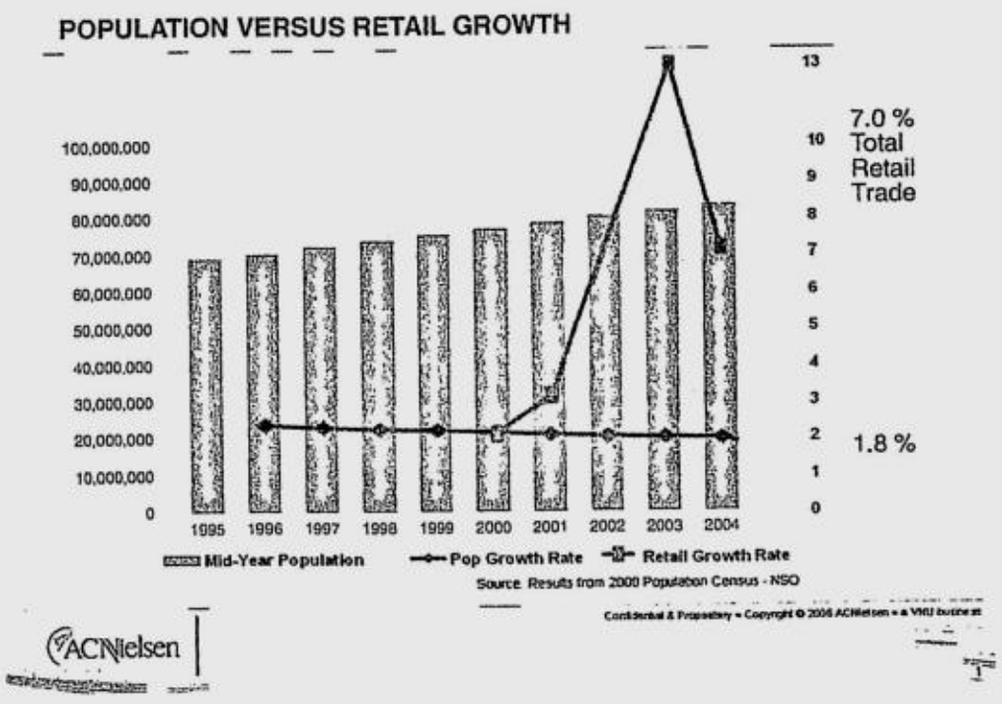
Peso's bullish run not yet over



Analysts see 49.25 to $1 in next few weeks

THE PESO THIS WEEK HIT ITS HIGHEST LEVEL in more than four years and chart patterns suggest the currency's bull run against the dollar is unlikely to fizzle out soon.

Boosted by upbeat economic news, easing political worries and strong remittance inflows, the peso has risen more than 7 percent since it hit a 6-1/2 month low at 53.65 to a dollar in late June. Last Monday, the currency broke through the key psychological level of 50 to a dollar, hitting a peak of 49.88 on Tuesday.

Analysts polled by Reuters in Singapore said a correction in the peso's rise was likely, but its upward trend was intact and it could rise to 49.25 in the next few weeks—or about 1.5 percent above current levels.

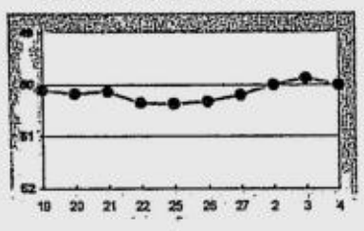
Winston Tang, a technical analyst at 4CAST, said the outlook for the dollar against the peso was down.

"We are trading pretty well from the three-month down

PESO/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 50.01 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Oct. 4, 2006

¥ 117.98 = $ 1

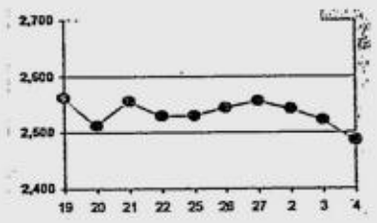
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 4, 2006

GOLD: $575.60-576.10

per ounce Hong Kong, Oct. 4, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 1.41-PERCENT lower yesterday as investors continued to take profits amid concerns that the massive damage wrought by Typhoon "Milenyo" will hurt the economy, dealers said.

Although some investors may also be

SHARES/ B3

Use of technology ushers in rebirth of retail industry

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE LOCAL RETAIL INDUSTRY IS EXPERIENCing a rebirth particularly among supermarkets and convenience stores, which use scanning technology that helps them operate more efficiently and offer more competitive prices.

According to the latest study by ACNielsen (Philippines) titled "The Future of Retail is Here," the growth of the industry was also spurred by a growing population.

Benedicto L. Cid Jr., company managing director, said in a briefing yesterday that modern retail channels—supermarkets and convenience stores—were growing in number faster than the population and in importance to people's daily lives.

The study also covered other channels like grocery stores, sari-sari stores, market stalls, drugstores and department stores.

Cid said supermarkets have grown to at least 1,122 outlets as of last year, recovering from a five-year low of 780 outlets in 2001.

In the same period, convenience stores grew in number to about 1,350 in 2005 from 548 in 2000.

Also, latest available data showed that the total growth of the retail industry in terms of numbers was 7 percent to 606,230 stores nationwide.

"Modern store formats continue to grow

USE/ B2

Masses not feeling economic gains—Habito

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES MIGHT HAVE already achieved a fairly decent growth rate, but its economic performance remains unfelt amid rising unemployment, growing cases of hunger and pessimism among consumers.

So observed Ateneo de Manila University's chief economist Cielito Habito. "(Figures seem to show that) what is happening is not only a jobless growth, but a job-eating growth," he said during the "Eagle Watch" forum organized by the Ateneo University yesterday.

The former director general of the National Economic and Development Authority noted that although the country posted a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 5.6 percent in the first half, unemployment rate worsened to 8 percent in July from the previous year's 7.7 percent.

While saying that the contradiction remained a "puzzle," he added that one possible reason for this was that sectors contributing to economic growth did not serve much in

MASSES/ B2

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SEC approves SMIC notes issue

₱33.2B in debt paper to complete tender offer

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISsion (SEC) has approved the plan of SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) to issue up to P33.2 billion worth of promissory notes to shareholders of Equitable PCI Bank.

In a resolution, the SEC has also exempted SMIC's promissory notes from registration due to the group's ability to pay for its obligations and the "limited character" of its promissory note issue.

The registration of securities would have subjected the company to financial reporting requirements.

The promissory notes issue is considered a "limited offering" with only 3.55 percent of Equitable PCI held by the public and the rest by shareholders who have access to the financial reports of the investment arm of the Sy group of companies.

Under Section 10.2 of the Securities Regulation Code, the Commission may exempt other transactions if it finds that the requirements under the Code are not required by public interest.

Last week, SMIC said Equitable PCI shareholders had agreed to sell their combined 374.9 million shares or 51.6 percent of the bank's total outstanding shares.

The sellers included the largest minority shareholders of EPCIB, namely the Government Social Insurance System (GSIS) with 13.55 percent, the SSS with 25.84 percent, EBC Investments Inc. with 10.8 percent and other individual shareholders with 1.34 percent.

The sale of the pension fund's stake was contingent on the resolution of a pending court case relating to the sale of SSS' stake in Equitable PCI.

The payees of the promissory notes include the SSS, the GSIS, EBCII and individual shareholders representing 1.34 percent of the bank.

The promissory notes, representing 90 percent of the acquisition amount, will be paid according to the following schedule: P3.7 billion each on June 2, 2007, and Feb. 2, 2008 and P25.8 billion on Oct. 8, 2008.

The initial 10 percent was paid last Oct. 2.

It will cost the SM group about P34.49 billion to acquire all of the offered shares, including those pledged by the SSS.

The SEC also received confirmation from two banks, Standard Chartered Bank and ABN Amro last Aug. 29, that SMIC had the financial muscle to implement its tender offer, and redeem the promissory notes when they fall due.

ABN Amro told the SEC in a letter that SMIC and its subsidiaries have the resources to raise up to $800 million or roughly P40 billion, either by tapping the international bond markets or through syndicated loans or a combination of the two.

Stanchart offered the same view, saying SMIC can fund its buyout through equity offerings or, if required, through the sale of assets

As of June 30, SMIC has total current assets of P38.4 billion.

SMIC recently completed its purchase of an additional 25.7 percent in EPCI Bank through a series of deals executed at the stock market.

IC to press capital hike

By Michelle V. Remo

THE INSURANCE COMMISSION HAS brushed aside fears that its directive raising the minimum capital requirement of insurance firms would force some firms to close down.

Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo said that the majority of life insurance firms are even capable of meeting the new capital requirements before the deadlines.

Under IC's Department Order No. 27-26, the minimum capital of Filipino-owned life and nonlife insurance firms will be raised from P50 million to P75 million by December next year.

The amount will be increased every year until the minimum capitalization reaches P250 million by December 2011.

Those with a maximum foreign equity of 40 percent are directed to increase capital to P150 million in December next year and to P300 million in December 2010.

Those with foreign equity of between 40 and 60 percent will increase their capital to P200 million in December 2007 and to P350 million by December 2010.

Those with more than 60-percent foreign equity will be required to have a minimum capital of P300 million by December 2007 and P500 million by December 2010.

Citigroup bullish on prospects of real estate investment trusts

BANKING GIANT CITIGROUP IS BULLISH on the prospects of a new investment instrument that will allow investors to ride on the growth of real estate sector.

Citigroup country officer Sanjiv Vohra said in a recent briefing that the time was right to introduce real estate investment trusts (REITs) in the Philippines.

An REIT is a company that buys, develops, manages and sells real estate assets.

It can be set up by a property firm that may pool its hotel, mall or other property assets and then list on the local bourse the shares of a special purpose company controlling these assets.

An REIT can also be designed to target small investors.

Citigroup, the Philippine Stock Exchange, the Asian Public Real Estate Association (APREA), and other key private sector representatives are organizing a forum on Friday at the Makati Shangri-La hotel to assess the opportunities for REITs and active real estate investment in the Philippines.

"All the drivers of growth for real-estate are aligned for the Philippines—the office and commercial spaces, between 25 to 40 percent of mid-tier housing is being generated by overseas Filipino workers and marketing offshore has become very important in the last 24 months," Vohra said.

Also supporting a possible launch of REITs in the country is the steady growth of malls, hotels and other tourism-related properties, which have enjoyed very high occupancy rates.

"Real estate is a sector which is showing signs of growth and progress," Vohra said, "This is where REITs come in."

A major advantage of a REIT investment is its liquidity or the ease by which assets can be converted into cash, unlike actual real estate assets that relatively take longer to sell.

One reason is that its shares are primarily traded on major stock exchanges, making it easier to buy and sell REIT assets/shares.

REITs could be owned by thousands of individuals, as well as large institutional investors including pension funds, endowment funds, insurance companies, bank trust departments and mutual funds.

Vohra also said REITs could help the banking and government sectors to cash in on their idle pieces of property.

For its part, the PSE plans to lead efforts to legislate incentives for REITs.

PSE president Francis Lim earlier said possible tax incentives include exemption or reduction in capital gains taxes when a REIT buys a piece of property and a cut in income taxes.

PSE officials estimated that the country's P600 billion worth of foreclosed properties could be tapped to start REITs once enabling laws are passed. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Use of technology ushers rebirth of retail industry

From page B1

faster than the population does," Cid said. "We will see further rapid expansion of these channels, with concurring improvement of convenience and enjoyment for shoppers."

He explained that such stores would benefit from the use of technologies for optimal use of shelves and space as well as the widening usage of electronic payment systems, loyalty cards, video monitoring of consumer behavior and scanning machines.

"The use of these technologies would result in more effective management of store operations and more effective partnership between retailers and manufacturers," Cid said.

"Technology minimizes cost increases and optimizes consumer choices," he added. "It also brings forth the most effective promotional offers because patterns of purchases and in-store behavior can be studied."

Retailers that benefit from data culled with scanning technology can also assess faster the effectiveness of their marketing efforts, sales, inventory and pricing.

"Increased productivity of retailers' staff, on the shop floor, and in the office and warehouse are passed on to consumers in terms of lower prices," Cid said.

As for manufacturers, they also benefit with the knowledge gained from easier recording of sales and inventory, ordering, receiving, storage and retrieval and other information that could suggest optimum ways of producing their merchandise.

Cid said opportunities for further growth would continue to abound with the advent of newer and more efficient technology such as radio frequency identification.

With RFID, microchips are embedded in each item, fostering a still more efficient manner of monitoring the movement of products from the factories, warehouses and shelves to consumers hands.

Masses not feeling . . .

From page B1

terms of providing substantial job opportunities.

Habito cited the booming mining sector, which he said so far has contributed only 117,000 new jobs nationwide this year. The number of jobs generated by the sector has not yet met expectations, he added.

He said that the pessimistic outlook among consumers indicated that they have yet to reap the benefits of economic growth.

He agreed with comments by administration officials that the Philippines was no longer the sick man of Asia given its GDP growth. Habito stressed, however, that the country's economic performance remained "mediocre" as joblessness was still a major problem.

In his presentation during the forum, Habito noted the recent survey by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showing that the consumer confidence index, the difference between the number of consumers optimistic about the economy and those who were pessimistic, stood at -37.2.

Per capita income, measured by dividing the country's economic output by its population, has already improved to $1,400 from below $1,000 in the 1990s, he said. However, the economist noted, cases of hunger has risen to record highs as shown by a Social Weather Stations survey.

This showed that the distribution of the economy's income remained inequitable, Habito said, with the poor not reaping the country's economic gains.

Habito said the Ateneo Center for Economic Research and Development has revised its GDP growth projection for the Philippines to 5.3-5.6 percent from the previous range of 4.7-5.1 percent.

The upward revision was anchored on the possible increase in government spending in the remaining months of the year given the lower-than-programmed budget deficit as of August.

He said consumer spending was also seen to increase with the growing amount of remittances from overseas Filipino workers and the slowdown in inflation.

Peso's bullish . . .

From page B1

channel, which starts at 53.65, and we're drifting down further below the upper channel which is a good sign that the trend in dollar/peso is still firmly down," he said.

"Shorts are still very comfortable because the upward channel line is currently situated at about 52.29, so unless we can get above that, the pressure is still on the downside," he added.

Tang said the peso was now likely to target chart resistance at 49.80, then 49.74 and then 49.25.

The 49.25 area acted as key support level for the dollar in May 2002. The peso's failure to break through that level put the currency on a weakening path that took it to the weak side of 55 to a dollar in March 2003.

"The move below 50 did result in new four-year (dollar/peso) lows but was not significant support in particular," said Dhiren Sarin, a technical analyst at Barclays Capital in London.

"With more important support at 49.10/30 in close proximity, we believe this is an area to watch more closely."

Sarin said that the daily slow stochastic momentum indicator was in oversold territory and suggested a relief rally for the dollar was due.

"The 49.30/10 area is where a Fibonacci retracement of the 1999-2004 uptrend and five-year lows coincide," he said. "This area should provide strong support and into the area, we will be looking for a temporary base and correction back toward 50.40."

Fibonacci retracement studies show that when currencies reverse direction, they often meet resistance at various retracement levels of the previous move—typically at 38.2 percent, 50 percent, 61.8 percent.

Analysts agreed that the long-term chart outlook suggested further peso gains.

Trend indicators such as the daily moving average convergence divergence (MACD) appeared to support this view.

The MACD is usually calculated by subtracting the 26-period exponential moving average of a given currency pair from its 12-period exponential moving average. A 9-day exponential moving average of the MACD itself acts as a trigger line.

In the peso's case, the MACD is close to moving below the trigger line, which would be a bearish signal for the dollar.

"Once we get a crossover, that could signal a bigger fall for dollar/peso," said 4CAST's Tang. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 4, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.6	14,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	40	40	39	39.5	1,670,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	58	58	57.5	57.5	932,200
China Banking Corp.	670	670	660	660	630
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	5,410,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	67.5	68	64	66	138,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	41	41	40	40.5	806,000
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	7,200
Phil. Savings Bank	43	43	42.5	43	3,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	32,900
Security Bank Corp.	50	50	50	50	15,400
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.65	0.65	40,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	4.55	5.7	4.55	5.6	8,091,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	30.5	30	30.5	15,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	100,000
Ivantage Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.44	725,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	49.5	50	49.5	50	300,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	51	51	50	50	315,200
Manila Electric Co. A	19.25	20	19.25	20	264,900
Manila Electric Co. B	28.5	29.5	28.5	29	767,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.8	9	8.8	9	3,933,000
Petron Corp.	4	4	3.9	4	3,431,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3	35,000
Cadp Group Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	17,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.5	22.75	47,800
Jollibee Foods Corp.	36	36	35	35	441,700
RFM Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	681,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65	64.5	65	59,500
San Miguel Corp. B	75.5	76.5	75.5	76.5	145,400
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	20.5	19.25	20.5	10,500,500
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.28	0.32	0.28	0.31	19,060,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.88	4,341,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	81,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.9	5.7	4.9	5.5	9,762,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5	5	5	5	5,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.5	1.64	1.5	1.6	618,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	4.05	4.8	4	4.55	8,584,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.6	0.61	0.57	0.59	82,850,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	860,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	70,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	460	460	450	452.5	317,600
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	318,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.026	0.025	0.025	1,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.06	2.06	448,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	20,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91	290,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.9	2.95	2.9	2.95	70,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.26	1.28	1.22	1.28	8,675,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.75	3.8	1,340,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.6	2.65	1,091,000
House of Investments Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	70,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.8	6.4	6.8	3,643,000
Keppel Holdings	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	85,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	10,000
Medco Holdings	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	150,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.12	1.14	474,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	1,690,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	20,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Smophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	500,000
SM Investments Corp.	250	252.5	250	250	149,040
Seafront Resources Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	1,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.1	0.1	0.095	0.095	6,090,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14	14	13.75	13.75	5,411,500
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	30,000
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	659,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	1	1.08	1	1.02	710,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	2,250,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	10,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.38	51,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	2,100,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.53	4,040,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.32	1.2	1.28	6,467,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0575	0.0575	0.0525	0.0525	1,100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.6	1.66	1.6	1.66	22,047,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.115	600,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.24	2.24	2.22	2.22	20,000
Interport Res.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	37,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.28	0.32	0.28	0.3	14,690,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.7	0.72	1,330,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	1,000,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.86	17,435,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.2	3.35	3.15	3.3	800,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	50,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	550,000
SM Development Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	1,034,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.5	2,228,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	1,030,000
Uniwide Holdings, Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	500,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.5	16.75	16.5	16.75	74,400
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.28	1.36	1.26	1.34	19,410,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1060	1060	1055	1060	13,470
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.65	4.65	4.5	4.55	14,665,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2200	2200	2160	2165	434,700
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.96	1.96	13,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.055	0.0575	0.055	0.0575	2,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.18	1.46	1.18	1.2	63,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	123,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.6	3.85	3.6	3.8	1,298,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	6,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	16.75	17	16.75	17	103,700
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	70,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	1,291,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2	2	1.98	1.98	3,752,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	860,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	33,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.06	2.06	2	2	357,000
Paxys Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	597,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6	6.2	5.9	6	3,943,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	6.1	6.2	5.9	6	2,526,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.01	311,100,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.8	2,409,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	20,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	17,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.235	0.235	0.23	0.23	6,010,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,880,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	495,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.023	0.023	178,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	64,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.55	7,242,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19	19	18.75	18.75	330,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.42	760,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.58	0.56	0.57	680,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,640,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	427,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,700,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.97	0.98	0.97	0.97	400,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	500,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.6	9.6	9.2	9.4	33,000
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	104	104	104	104	680
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	222,700

CURRENCIES

October 4, 2006

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.785608	1.000000	49.9080
Japan	Yen	0.006664	0.008483	0.4234
United Kingdom	Pound	1.483542	1.888400	94.2463
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100837	0.128355	6.4059
Switzerland	Franc	0.630808	0.802955	40.0739
Canada	Dollar	0.700185	0.891266	44.4813
Singapore	Dollar	0.496654	0.632191	31.5514
Australia	Dollar	0.584747	0.744325	37.1478
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.084006	2.652731	132.3925
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.209478	0.266645	13.3077
Brunei	Dollar	0.495089	0.630199	31.4520
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.020900	0.026603	1.3277
UAE	Dirham	0.213899	0.272272	13.5886
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.272900	63.5279
Argentina	Peso	0.253177	0.322269	16.0838
Brazil	Real	0.363203	0.462321	23.0735
Denmark	Kroner	0.134120	0.170721	8.5203
India	Rupee	0.017191	0.021882	1.0921
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213162	0.271334	13.5417
Mexico	New Peso	0.071047	0.090436	4.5135
New Zealand	Dollar	0.518108	0.659500	32.9143
Norway	Kroner	0.119261	0.151807	7.5764
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012974	0.016515	0.8242
South Africa	Rand	0.100487	0.127910	6.3837
Korea	Won	0.000829	0.001055	0.0527
Sweden	Kroner	0.107291	0.136571	6.8160
Syria	Pound	0.015134	0.019264	0.9614
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023776	0.030264	1.5104
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000366	0.000466	0.0233

Shares close lower

From page B1

taking profits to take part in ongoing stock offerings, they said.

The composite index lost 35.68 points to 2,486.82, having moved between 2,483.11 and 2,515.99. It was the worst finish in almost three weeks.

Losers led gainers 64 to 30 with 48 unchanged. Turnover was 2.01 billion shares valued at P2.32 billion.

"Investors took profits given apprehensions about the economic impact of the recent typhoon, and possibly because they want to raise money for those public offerings," said Harry Liu of Summit Securities.

Manila Mining Corp. extended its stock rights offer by two days up to Friday because of the shortened trading week last week triggered by the bad weather and power outages.

Robinsons Land Corp. will list today an additional 450 million common shares following its public offering to international and local investors.

Liu sees the market's next support level at 2,450 points. -AFP

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• Strategies to improve enterprise positioning and performance
• Leadership principles and applications

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     - Looking at the Big Picture
     - Market and Micro Market Analysis: The Small Picture
   • Internal Assessment: A Framework for Organizational Diagnosis
3. Enterprise Visioning and Positioning
4. Entrepreneurial Leadership
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Peza-registered investments up 45% to P58B

Exports rose 11.8% in first 8 months

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE Authority said it had registered some P58.1 billion worth of investments as of Sept. 30.

This was 45.1 percent higher than the P40 billion posted in the same period last year.

Also, Peza said it recently approved 17 new projects worth P6.05 billion, with expected average export sales of $66.4 million a year.

Peza Director General Lilia de Lima said the projects were expected to create 2,855 new jobs.

De Lima said five of the new projects—worth some P324.7 million—were engaged in information technology-related businesses.

Of the total amount registered as of end-September, locator investments accounted for P45.06 billion or 78 percent, while ecozone developers represented P13.05 billion.

"The expected annual average direct employment to be generated by these investments is 62,215 or 9.9 percent higher than year-ago's 56,613," De Lima said.

During the period covered, investments approved for Peza numbered 341 or 21.4 percent higher than the 281 projects listed in the same period of 2005. Of all the ventures registered, 281 were locator projects and 60 ecozone developer projects.

Also, exports earnings from Peza-listed projects as of Aug. 31 reached $22.9 billion or 11.8 percent higher than the $20.5 billion posted from January to August of 2005.

In the same period, the number of jobs created by Peza projects reached 1.36 million or 23.3 percent higher than year-ago level.

Last month, Peza said registered investments had breached the P1-trillion mark since the agency's creation in 1995.

In 2005, Peza registered some P67 billion worth of investments, which could grow this year by more than 10 percent.

Total exports from the country's economic zones registered an increase of some 6.3 percent to $32.9 billion last year from $30.9 billion the previous year.

Export revenues from the four public ecozones jumped 17.4 percent to a total of $8.1 billion while those from 49 private or special economic zones (SEZ) rose by 2.4 percent to some $24.4 billion and those from 23 information technology parks and buildings went up 82.1 percent to $376.1 million.

P2.5-B FONTANA LEISURE PARKS PROJECT
President Macapagal-Arroyo is all smiles as Jack Lam (left), chair of the Jimei Group of Companies, presents the scale model of the 120 villas to be constructed under the P2.5-billion Fontana Leisure Parks development project. With the President and Lam is Jimei Group managing director Norman Ng (second from left.)

BSP moves to free up more funds for small, medium enterprises

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPinas is considering proposals to remove or limit local banks' alternative compliance options to the SME law's mandatory lending provision.

The proposal, which forms part of the agenda of the inter-sectoral National Competitive Summit 2006, was aimed at freeing up more funds for lending to small- and medium-scale enterprises.

"We're looking at it but there is no decision yet. But of course we are here to increase lending to SMEs," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters.

The Magna Carta for SMEs requires banks to earmark 6 percent of their total loan portfolio for lending to small-scale enterprises and another 2 percent for medium-scale enterprises.

Small enterprises are those with capital of P1.5 million to P15 million, while medium enterprises are business entities with capital of P15 million to P60 million.

To ensure that banks meet the mandatory credit requirements, the BSP presently allows the following alternative modes of compliance:

- The use of untapped committed credit lines.
- Investments in Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corp. (SBGFC) instruments.
- Equity investments in and/or loans by BAP Credit Guarantee Corp..
- Equity investments in the small business guarantee fund of Land Bank of the Philippines and other government financial institutions.
- Equity investments in venture capital corporations.

Under the national competitiveness agenda, the BSP was likewise asked to require detailed reports of private financial institutions to include the profile of SME borrowers.

Private lenders tend to look at SMEs as high-risk borrowers. This is why they opt to invest in government securities and other low-risk investments instead of lending directly to SMEs.

The competitive summit agenda acknowledged the urgency of legislating a credit information bill, now pending at the House, to permit the sharing of information to protect investors and lenders.

Logistics firms OK 3-way merger

By Riza T. Olchondra

A UNIT OF GERMAN TRANSPORTATION AND logistics giant Deutsche Bahn AG, Schenker is spearheading a logistics coup in the Philippines, taking over the operations of its local agent CPI Logistics and US forwarding firm BAX Global.

The three-way merger, which will adopt the century-old brand name Schenker, will help boost the standards of logistics and supply chain management in the Philippines. This will also give the Philippines the chance to figure more prominently in the global logistics network.

The resulting entity is expected to post annual revenue of more than $60 million (P3 billion) and employ about 520 employees, Schenker officials said.

Schenker, whose strength is in air forwarding, draws most of its 8.9 billion euros in annual sales from bringing premium cars such as BMW to thousands of destinations worldwide. CPI, with 180 employees in the Philippines, is strongest in freight and warehousing activities in Asia-Pacific. BAX's strengths are sea freight and logistics services for such companies as HP and Microsoft, with 340 employees in its Philippine office.

Schenker managing director for the Philippines Reiner Allgeier said the company would use the country's roll-on, roll-off (Roro) system in its logistics operations and supply chain management.

Allgeier said that for the Philippines to draw more logistics businesses, the government must continue to improve the Roro system which, based on government data, had so far cut inter-island transportation costs by 45 percent.

"Time saved is money saved for the one who paid for the goods to be moved, for the distributor, for the retailer and for the consumer in terms of lower prices," Allgeier said. "A more efficient Roro system will benefit the whole economy."

The merger will likewise complete Schenker's logistics network in Asia Pacific, said regional CEO Karl-Heinz Matthes, who flew in from Singapore to Manila to sign the agreement with CPI owner Patrick Chen.

The combined capitalization, network and manpower of the three companies will make Schenker the second-largest logistics company in the world, next only to DHL.

Pag-IBIG Fund
Cagayan de Oro Regional Office
Jo Filmor Building
Mortola, Cagayan de Oro City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF MODULAR PARTITIONS AND FURNITURE

The Pag-IBIG Fund, Cagayan de Oro Branch, through the Corporate Budget for the contract approved by the governing Board, intends to apply the sum of Nine Million Nine Hundred Eighty Five Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Five Pesos and 21/100 (P9,985,655.21) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF MODULAR PARTITIONS AND FURNITURE. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

The Pag-IBIG Fund now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the Supply and Installation of Modular Partitions and Furniture. Delivery of the goods is required within 45 days from receipt of Notice of Award.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is restricted to Filipino citizen/s sole proprietorships organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section III of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Pag-IBIG Fund Cagayan de Oro Branch and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below effective October 5, 2006 during office hours.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00) in the form of CASH. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The Pag-IBIG Fund, Cagayan de Oro Branch will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on October 17, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. at the address stated below.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 2:00 p.m. of November 6, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form indicated in the Terms of Reference. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on November 6, 2006 at 2:00 p.m. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The Pag-IBIG Fund, Cagayan de Oro Branch reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Pag-IBIG Fund
Cagayan de Oro Branch
Fermin A. Sta. Teresa, Jr.
Jofelmor Bldg., Mortola St.
Tel. # 72-63-48
Email Address: hdmfcaro@skyinet.net
Fax Number: (088) 72-64-87
Website: www.pagibigfund.gov.ph

(Sgd.) FERMIN A. STA. TERESA, JR.
BAC Chairman

(PDI--Oct. 5 & 12, 2006)

INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for sale through public bidding, on an *"as-is-where-is"* basis and as one whole lot, the following National Government (NG) / National Power Corporation (NPC) property:

DESCRIPTION	BASE PRICE
A parcel of land with an area of 1,378 square meters located at Kamagong Street corner Ayala Avenue Extension, Makati City	P 55,120,000.00

Sealed bids will be received on Thursday, October 19, 2006 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. and immediately thereafter, the bids shall be opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P2,000.00.

In the event that the public bidding becomes a failure, the PMO reserves the right to accept proposals for the subject assets.

For inquiries, please contact Mr. Matthew R. de Guzman of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 817-6331 or 818-4733

Privatization and Management Office
104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
Fax (632) 818-0906 / 818-4591

(PDI – October 3, 4 & 5, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) SECRETARIAT OFFICE
Tel. No. (632) 455-2758 E-mail: vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Provision of Frame Relay and Internet Services for Year 2006

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its 2007 *Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P600,000.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *the provision of Internet Service for NFA Central Office covering the period January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *Provision of Internet Service for NFA Central Office covering the period January 1, 2007 to December 31, 2007*. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of P2,500.00. The method of payment will be *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *October 19, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City* on November 3, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in either of the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on *November 3, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.* at the *NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *National Food Authority* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity – *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Persons – *Jose D. Chua / Violeta S. Villarama*
Address – *Philsugin Bldg., North Ave., Quezon City*
Telephone / Fax No. *(632) 455-2758*
e-mail address – *vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Website *www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI – October 5 & 12, 2006)

METRO ILOILO WATER DISTRICT
Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033) 337-4744; 337-8482; 337-3235; (033) 337-3246; 337-3272; 335-0147
Fax No. (033) 336-6538

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Metro Iloilo Water District (MIWD), through its Bids and Awards Committee 1 (BAC-1), invites qualified bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following contracts:

Item No.	Qty.	Name of Contract	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Cost of Bid Documents (Non-Refundable)	Contract Duration
1	1 lot	Contract for Service Application and Construction Order (Area I) (Area I: Arevalo, City Proper, Lapaz, Leganes, Mandurriao, Molo & Oton)	P 2,250,000.00	P 1,000.00	1 year
2	1 lot	Contract for Service Application and Construction Order (Area II) (Area II): Cabatuan, Jaro, Maasin, Pavia, San Miguel & Sta. Barbara	P 2,250,000.00	P 1,000.00	1 year

Prospective bidders should have the experience in undertaking a similar contract within the last two years with an amount of 50% of the proposed contract for Bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted accordingly.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

Bid Documents and additional information may be obtained at the BAC-1 Secretariat, Ground Floor of the MIWD Building, Bonifacio Drive, Iloilo City.

The schedule of procurement activities is as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Advertisement	October 5-11, 2006
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 12-19, 2006
3. Pre-Bid Conference	October 20, 2006, 2:00 p.m.
4. Deadline of Submission of Bids	November 3, 2006, 10:00 a.m.
5. Opening of Bids	November 3, 2006 10:00 a.m.

The MIWD BAC-1 reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive minor informality in the bids received, declare a failure of bidding for any justified and reasonable ground, and to award the contract to the bidder whose bid, as evaluated by the BAC-1, is the most advantageous to the District.

Approved by
(Sgd.) ERNESTO J. CABEROY
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee 1

(PDI – October 5, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
FRIENDSHIP TOURS AND RESORTS CORPORATION, 3/F, Dusit Hotel, Ayala Center, Makati City	Yuki Nozaki	Ticketing Reservations Assistant
HUAXIN TECHNOLOGIES PHILS. INC., Unit 1609, Prestige Tower Condo., Don Francisco Ortigas Jr. Rd., Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City	Gang Wang	Production Manager
YOGA WORKS INC., Unit 1503, 88 Corporate Center, 141 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Aljarreau Parilonia Galang	Consultant
XPERT AIR SERVICES, INC., 7 Ideal St., Mandaluyong City	Jieun Choi (w/o Kim)	Consultant
VERI TRAVEL AGENCY, INC., Suite 306 Sunrise Center, #3488 P. Ocampo St., Malate, Manila	Jeon Seonmyoung	Operations Manager

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

(PDI–Oct. 5, 2006)

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for:

PROJECT	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT
Hiring of an Architect (Design Services) for the Construction of a Two (2) Storey Commercial Building at the DBP Head Office Building, Training Center, Staff House and Cottages at the DBP Norham Mansion, Baguio City	P 4,144,500.00 SOURCE OF FUND: DBP FUND
* Bids received in excess of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.	

Design Development: Sixty (60) days upon Contract Signing
Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Submission and Opening of Letter of Intent (LOI) and Eligibility Requirement Documents (Prospective Bidders are encouraged to attend the Opening of Eligibility Requirements Documents)	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of October 18, 2006 (Wednesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Issuance of Bid Data Sheet/Terms of Reference	October 19-20, 2006	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Pre-Bidding Conference	October 24, 2006 (Tuesday) at 9:00 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Technical and Financial Proposals of Eligible Consultants/Bidders	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of November 7, 2006 (Tuesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Technical Proposals (Eligible Bidders are encouraged to attend the Opening of Technical Proposals)	November 7, 2006 (Tuesday) at 9:30 a.m.	OPS Conference Room, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens of organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. Only those that are eligible will be allowed to submit bids.

The contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during the post-qualification. Interested parties may secure the Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City or you may download these forms at **www.devbankphil.com.ph** and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. A non-refundable fee of Php 1,000.00 will be charged to all eligible bidders. Quality Cost Based Evaluation/Selection (QCBE/QCBS) will be used in the evaluation of proposals. DBP shall evaluate the Consultants/bidders based on the following criteria and weights:

Criteria	Weight (%)
Part I - Technical Proposal	
a. Experience and Capability of Firm	25%
b. Quality and Competency of Assigned Key Personnel	15%
c. Plan of Approach and Methodology	20%
Part II - Financial Proposal	40%
Total	100%

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702/8189511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – October 5, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS

In Compliance with RA 7041

A. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER III - SG 28
(2 Positions)

1. **Preliminary Investigation & Administrative Adjudication Bureau - B**; Item No. OMBA-GIPO3-15-2004
2. **Preliminary Investigation & Administrative Adjudication Bureau - D**; Item No. OMBA-GIPO3-14-2004

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: Five (5) years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related works; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

B. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER II - SG 27
(2 positions)

1. **Prosecution and Monitoring Bureau**; Item No. OMBA-GIO2-21-1998
2. **Preliminary Investigation & Administrative Adjudication Bureau - D**; Item No. OMBA-GIO2-111-1998

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: Four (4) years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related works; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

C. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER I - SG 26
(4 positions)

Field Investigation Office
Item Nos. OMBA-GIO1-25-1998, OMBA-GIO1-28-1998, OMBA-GIO1-34-2003 and OMBA-GIO1-35-2003

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: Three (3) years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation/prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related works; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

D. ASSOCIATE GRAFT INVESTIGATION OFFICER I (3 positions)

General Investigation Bureau - A
Item Nos. OMBA-AGIO1-111-2004, OMBA-AGIO1-116-2004 and OMBA-AGIO1-117-2004

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: None required; Training: None required; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

Education: Bachelor's degree relevant to the job; Experience: 6 months of experience in conducting community work, systems studies/analyses, counseling, investigation or other related work; Training: None required; Eligibility: Career Service Professional/ Second Level Eligibility.

Applicants should submit within ten (10) calendar days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

1) A letter stating the position applied for;
2) Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
3) 1"x 1" picture (colored)
4) * Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5) * Transcript of Records;
6) * Certificates of Seminars/Training attended;
7) * Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable)
8) * Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9) Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

*Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

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Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
PCA Building, Eliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 929-9597 • 929-8074 / Fax No. 928-4038

AMENDMENT TO THE INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Contractor's required category as registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) should be at least **"Small B"** for Water Treatment Plant and Systems or Sewerage and Sewage Treatment/Disposal Plant" instead of the "Medium A" as earlier mentioned in the advertisements for the project, **"Construction of Multi-Species Hatchery"** located at Brgy. Latu-Latu, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

(Sgd.) MALCOLM I. SARMIENTO, JR.
Director

(PDI - Oct. 5, 2006)

LEGAL NOTICE

Legal notice is hereby given to the public that in a Letter of Application dated 25 September 2006, the The Jobconnections International Manpower Services, Inc. – a corporation duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission with Company Registry No. CS200628216 – with principal office address at Suite 508 National Life Building, Session Road, Baguio City, has applied for a license as a Landbased Recruitment Agency with the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Manila. Further notice is hereby given that the Incorporators, stockholders, officeres and personnel of the company are the following: Franklin B. Calpito (PRE/CEO/ CEO), Nimfa N. Rivera (Vice President), Florence N. Rivera (CFO), Marcita M. Perez (CoS), James C. Dodwell (Incorporator/Overseas Marketing Officer), Atty. Isagani G. Calderon (Leg), Femia Fontanos (AO), Maily Rivera (Marketing Officer) and Fritz Almazan (Office Clerk).

(PDI–October 5, 2006)

NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS **More Classified Ads:**

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY; DOLE-NCR; METRO ILOILO WATER DISTRICT; PRIVATIZATION MANAGEMENT OFFICE; PAG-IBIG B4

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OBITUARIES

ROQUE GAMIS DOROTAN

(August 7, 1934 – October 2, 2006)

Loving husband of Esperanza†

Caring and hardworking father of
Beya and Steve, Vicvic, Malou and Mike, Nono and Au

Compassionate grandfather of
Shawn and Kristina, Gayle and Matthew, and Isabelle

Nurturing brother of
Dioklan† and Shuing, Jelly and Dionga†, Ente† and Daisy, Amy and Oner, Nelia and Pet, Baby and Jerry, Boy† and Ebic†, Pok Yuen and Sheun Ying Omeng and Amy, Danny, Emma and Manny, Mamie and Ana, Eddie and Oyen, Ping and Evelyn

His remains lie in state at his residence at San Julian, Irosin, Sorsogon. He will be laid to rest at the Irosin Catholic Cemetery on Saturday, October 7, 2006 after a Mass at 10:00 AM in the St. Michael Archangel Church.

Prayers for him are greatly appreciated.

"Only your best is good enough for your mission."
- General Atienza

In Loving Memory

On the 40th Death Anniversary of

GENERAL RIGOBERTO J. ATIENZA

Former Chief of Staff
Armed Forces of the Philippines
who died on October 8, 1966

His children Zenaida and David Clymer, Eloisa and Victor Lim, Herminia Atienza-Ilano, Rosalinda and Balbino Hernando, Rolando and Cecilia Reynoso-Atienza, and Josefina Atienza-Salvaña, grandchildren and great-grandchildren invite relatives and friends to remember him in their prayers and to join them tomorrow, Friday, October 6, 2006 in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at Camp Gen. Rigoberto J. Atienza, Libis, Quezon City at 3:00 p.m., after which will be the annual Gen. Rigoberto J. Atienza Memorial Awards Ceremonies, and on Monday, October 9, 2006 at graveside at the Libingan ng mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City at 9:30 a.m. On Sunday, October 8, 2006, Holy Mass will be offered for the General at military and PNP chapels throughout the country.

We invite you to also remember his wife **EUGENIA SUAREZ ATIENZA** who died on June 22, 1995.

"The Lord is my strength and my shield in whom my heart trusted and found help. So my heart rejoices; with my song I praise my God..."
Psalm 28:7

CORAZON FABICO AGATEP

of Lasam Cagayan & Laoag City

Peacefully joined her Creator on October 02, 2006 in Quezon City.

Her loving husband **Benjamin C. Agatep** (†); and children **Grace** and **Jun, Judy & Norie, Heidi, Cheryl & Boycy, Ariele & Art** (†), **Sigrid** and **James, Benjie** and **Ruth**; her brothers & sisters, sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law, grandchildren, nephews, & nieces, and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Chapel 2, Marikina City, Metro Manila.

Cremation is on Friday, October 6, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. Her urn will be transferred to Callao Lasam, Cagayan immediately thereafter.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."
— 2 Corinthians 5:4-5

Atty. Gracia A. Olarte vda. de Ignacio

of Sacramento, USA and Pozurrubio, Pangasinan

Peacefully joined her Creator on October 1, 2006 at the age of 80.

Her bereaved sister **Alicia**, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul and to remember her always in their prayers.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, 143 G. Araneta Avenue cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City.

There will be a Requiem Mass at 8:00 a.m. on October 7, 2006 (Saturday) at La Funeraria Paz. Interment immediately follows at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

BUSINESS

Investment bank expects RP budget gap to hit only ₱85B

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT BANK BEAR, Stearns & Co. Inc. has revised its budget deficit projection for the Philippines this year to P85 billion, from the original forecast of P110 billion to P125 billion, in view of country's improved fiscal position.

"The August budget outcome has caused us to rethink our forecast for 2006," Bear, Stearns & Co. said in its latest assessment of the Philippine's fiscal sector.

It said it was expecting revenue collection to continue improving in the remaining months of the year.

The Department of Finance earlier reported a budget surplus of P14.3 billion in August. This brought the government's budget position in the first eight months of the year to a deficit of only P34.2 billion.

The government aims to reduce the budget deficit from this year's ceiling of P125 billion to P63 billion next year and to zero by 2008.

Bear Stearns noted that the country's relatively strong imports, which grew by 9.6 percent in the first seven months of the year, would further boost the revenue collection of the Bureau of Customs.

The country's 5.6-percent economic growth in the first half would help boost the tax collection by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the investment bank said.

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'06 inflation seen at 6.6%

BSP: 'Milenyo' unlikely to affect downtrend

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS EXpects the country's inflation rate to average at 6.6 percent for the whole year despite some upward pressure caused by Typhoon "Milenyo."

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. told reporters the government would review its inflation forecast as the actual rate might turn out to be even lower than the 6.9-7 percent projection of the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee. Tetangco said it might hit as low as 6.6 percent.

"Inflation has started to show a decelerating trend and we expect it to continue declining this year and in 2007," he added.

He said the government would have to factor in the impact of Typhoon Milenyo on prices, but noted it would not likely affect the recent downtrend in consumer prices.

Asked whether the BSP had room to cut its overnight rates given the downtrend in inflation, Tetangco said: "We'll assess it. We'll have a policy meeting and it will be taken up."

The BSP has so far kept its overnight borrowing rate steady at 7.5 percent since October last year. In 1995, it jacked up this key policy rate by a total of 75 basis points and also raised the reserve requirement on banks by 2 percentage points.

Tetangco said the low-interest rate regime in the country should help enhance the business environment.

"We've kept interest rates at the same level since last year. The movements are stable and the rate is low so (it's) good for investors and for borrowers, particularly those in the manufacturing and exporting sectors," Tetangco said.

The strengthening of the peso has likewise helped temper the country's inflation rate, the BSP chief said.

"If you look at the entire situation, the exchange rate movements affect different sectors differently and an appreciation in our view is good for moderating inflation," he said.

Last August, the DBCC scaled down its inflation forecast for this year to 6.9-7 percent and further to 4.3-4.8 percent for next year despite the continued volatility in global oil prices.

Shell CNG stations may open in May

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SHELL GROUP OF COMPANIES IS LOOKing at finally starting the commercial run of its mother-daughter compressed natural gas (CNG) stations by May 2007.

Shell country chair Edgar Chua said, however, this was not yet definite as Shell was still awaiting the results of other studies that it had conducted to ensure that the CNG refilling stations would be safe and would operate without glitches.

In the meantime, he said the government could entertain other parties interested in setting up their own CNG refilling stations.

"Since (our) project is delayed, the government can entertain other parties. It's up to the government. But the question is: are there really other entities serious enough to do so?" he said.

The start of commercial operations of Shell's mother station in Tabangao, Batangas and daughter station along the South Luzon Expressway in Binan, Laguna had been shelved more than five times in the past due mainly to technical issues.

Shell's last commitment was for commercial operations to start late last year.

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LifeStyle

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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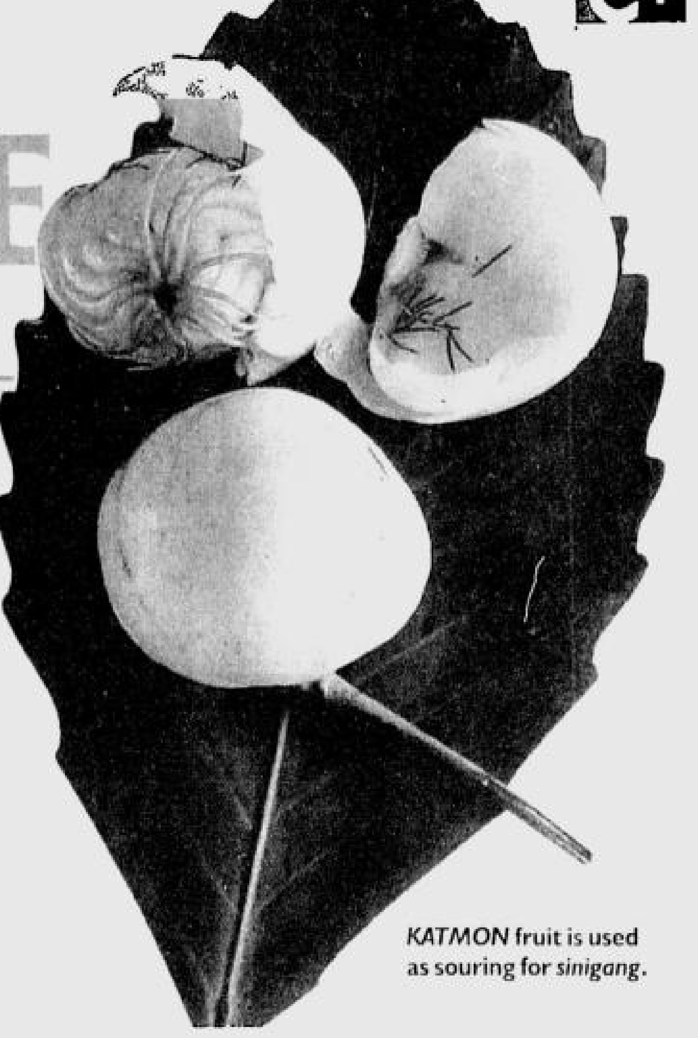


KATMON fruit is used as souring for *sinigang*.

When everything you need grows around you

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

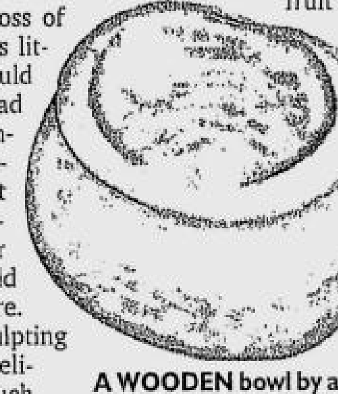
THIS COLUMN WAS BEGUN just before the storm hit Manila last week. It gave me an eerie feeling because it was about an equally devastating storm that hit Quezon almost two years ago.

Agos River. The name was on a poster that told us, who were attending an art show, from where the sculpted wood came. The name also brought me back to Quezon and my food research in Infanta for a book.

Agos River is more identified with General Nakar, the town next to Infanta. Its name is apt for a river whose water does flow.

But more than just water flowed when heavy rains in December 2004 loosened the soil. Trees were brought downstream from the mountains.

After the mudflow, the loss of lives and property, the trees littered the banks and would have ended up as charcoal had not the Gawad Kalinga Foundation and Smart Communications, together with artist Rey Paz Contreras, convinced General Nakar townsfolk that the trees could be transformed into sculpture.



A WOODEN bowl by a Banglos sculptor of General Nakar in Quezon

More importantly, sculpting could be an alternative livelihood that could bring much more than charcoal could at P65 per sack.

Imagine fishermen, farmers, students and housewives discovering they could sculpt, become artists. They started by carving out bowls just to get used to the tools. They learned later to fashion wood into amazing figures of mother and child, a giant squid, the head of Jesus Christ.

The group of new artists is called the Banglos sculprors, named after the particular area in General Nakar where it comes from.

Development fund

The group has also set aside part of the income derived from the sale of the art pieces for a community development fund (e-mail banglosart@yahoo.com).

In many places in the country constantly visited by storms, root crops are a major part of the cuisine because they never get blown away. In Infanta, the *galyang* growing in muddy areas was pointed out to me. The leaves look like bigger versions of the *gabi*. The yellowish root is huge and, when as big as a person, the locals merely slice off a bit (*tapyas*) rather than dig up the whole.

The root is sliced and then boiled in *pandan* or a bit of vanilla to give it a good aroma.

The cooked *galyang* is then placed between plastic sheets and beaten to a pulp with a wooden 2" x 2" stick. The *galyang* mush is cooked with sugar, milk, cheese, margarine, some water and *gumaan*, the Infanta term for coconut that is at that stage just before it can be milked for *gata*.

One cook, Rebecca Mercado, is known for her unique way of adding Coca-Cola to the mixture giving her version a decidedly Coke flavor. The soft drink, she said, also acted as preservative otherwise the cooked *galyang* had to be eaten right away.

Rice substitute

The *galyang* is also the best substitute for rice when the staple is low.

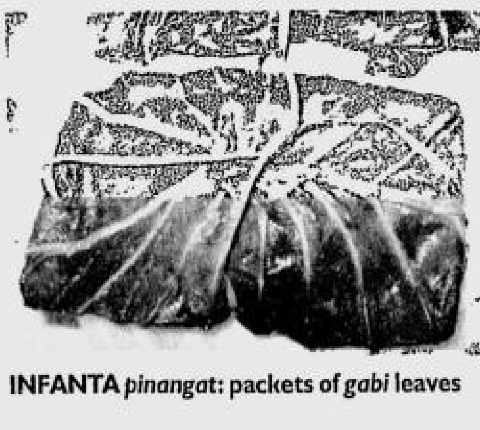
Aside from the *galyang*, other ingredients were pointed out. It seemed that everything they needed for cooking could be found around them.

A tree with green fruits and beautiful white flowers peeking through thick leaves turned out to be *katmon*. The round green fruit is used for souring *sinigang* though the result isn't as sour as tamarind.

Cooks peel off the rind and, when beautiful fuchsia strips appear, the interior ridges underneath are disassembled. Everything is then placed in the broth.

When the *katmon* is used to sour shellfish like the *baransina*, the broth comes out white instead of clear.

The most prized tree, however, is the *santol*. Flesh from the ripe fruit is grated then cooked with coconut milk. This is the most basic *sinantolan*. The additional ingredients depend on how much money one can spare.



INFANTA *pinangat*: **packets of** *gabi* **leaves**

The more expensive add-ons are the *kasag*, very small mud crabs; shrimp and ground beef. A more complete *sinantol* would also include *burao*, the local name for *matangbaka*, or maybe *talimago* (*galunggong*) cooked as *sinaing* (steamed in its own juice) and then shredded (*hinimay*).

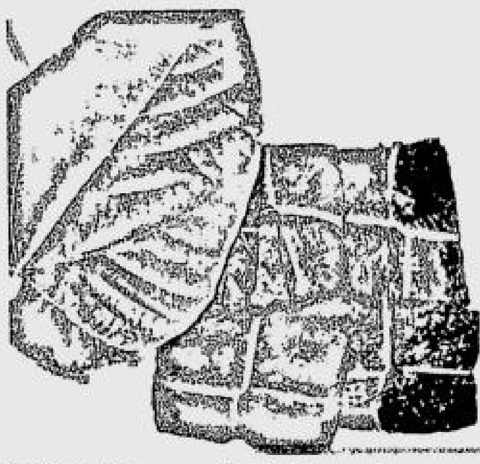
Sinantol is available year round because the grated meat is preserved in salt when the fruit is in season.

Chances are, the leaves you see around are also used in cooking. *Galyang* leaves are also cooked in coconut milk, just like *gabi* leaves. The Infanta version of *laing*, shredded *gabi* leaves and stems, is called *tinuto*.

Memorable

The local cook known for dishes using leaves is Ellen Abelleneda. Her *pinangat* and *tinadtad* are memorable.

Infanta *pinangat* is the same as its Bicol and Negros Occidental counterparts in its use of *gabi* leaves and stems. But it differs because vinegar is mixed with grated coconut before the milk is squeezed out making the taste more sour.



TINADTAD wrapped in *kalalawan* **leaves**

Salay or lemon grass contributes to the aroma. And the way the packet of *gabi* leaf is wrapped is decidedly more artistic. The underside of the leaf is exposed so that the ribs form a sort of spider's web design.

Tinadtad could have gotten its name because the first step to cooking the dish is to chop together shrimp, *gumaan* and the *palapot*, the collective name for the flavoring ingredients of ginger, garlic, salt, pepper and lemon grass. Everything is then wrapped in *kalalawan* leaves mostly found in the mountains, tied and then cooked in coconut milk, turning the leaf packets almost black. It is then boiled with the *palapot* and served bathed with coconut cream.

After that storm two years ago, I was told that life went on as usual. The ingredients for cooking their wonderful country cuisine can still be found around Infanta. And the Banglos sculptors of General Nakar still fashion art pieces out of discarded wood they find along the banks of the Agos River.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

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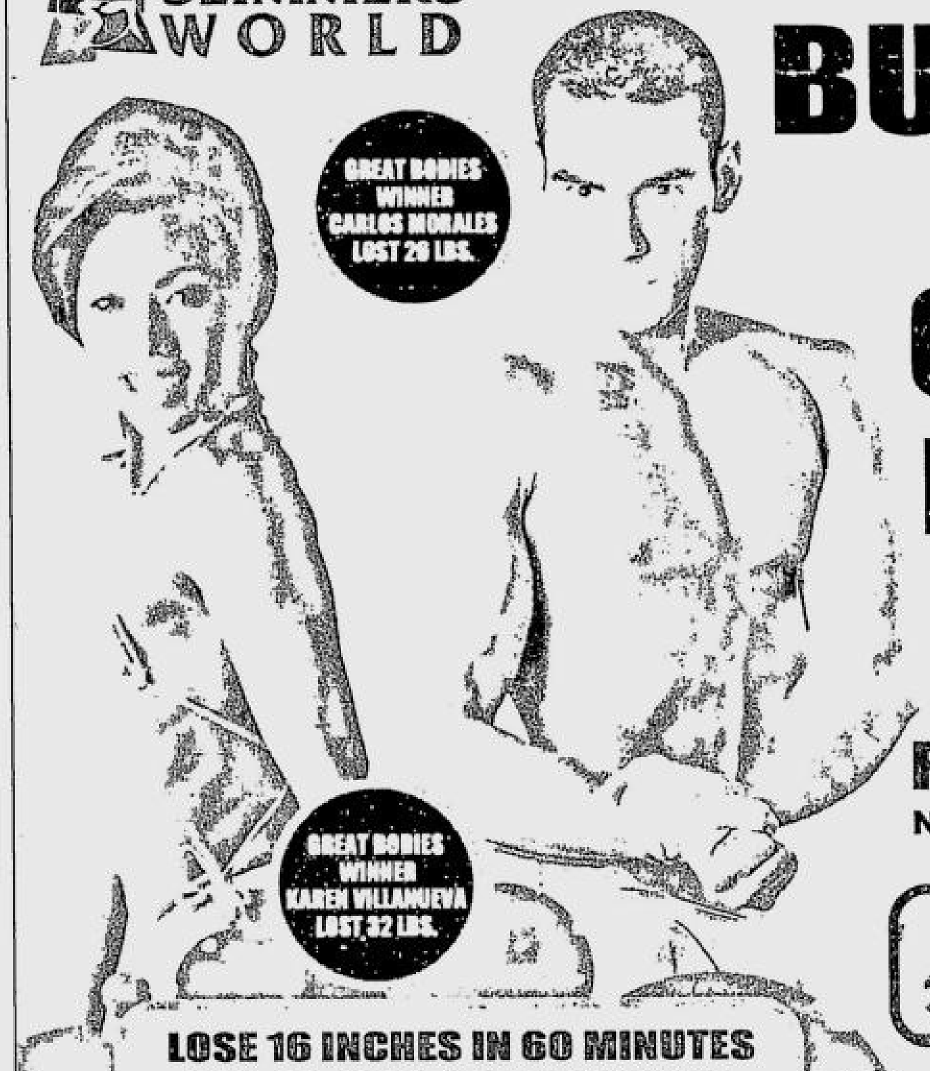

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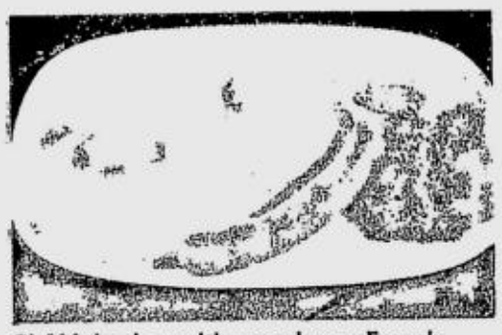
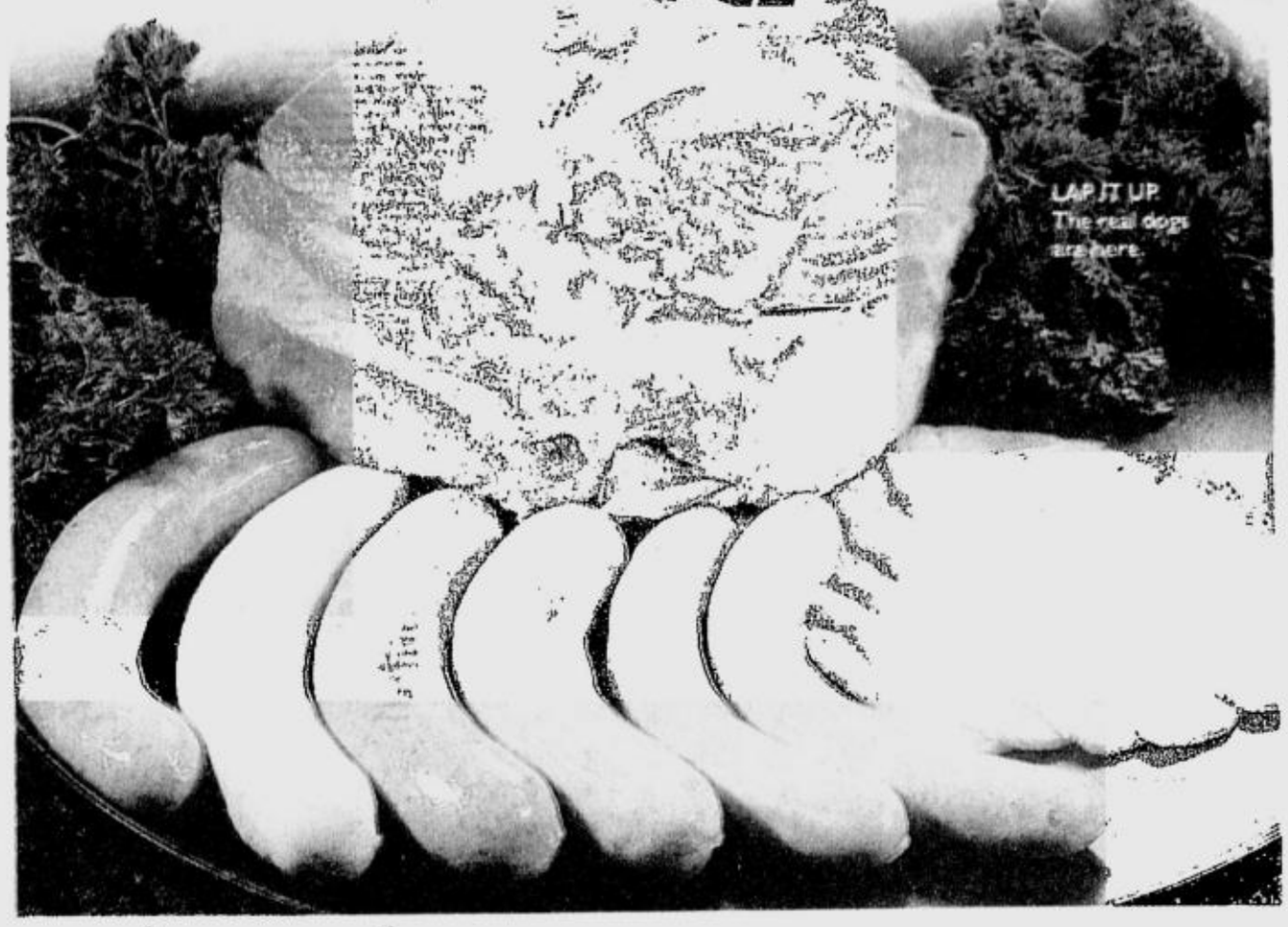
FRIED rice the Top Dog way

THE CRAB Meat Meal with two fillings of your choice—mushroom, bell pepper, onion, mixed veggies, cheese—served with oyster sauce, garlic rice, cheese omelet and iced tea



SLAM the dogs with pancakes or French toast.

THE RESTAURANT can seat up to 66 people. CHITO VECINA



Top Dog makes sausages the way they are meant to be from quality ingredients, aroma and texture to looks, snap and flavor

THE STAFF prepares French toast. CHITO VECINA

A winner of a wiener

By Anne A. Jambora

THE HOTTEST DOGS ARE IN town. Have them on the run, on a stick or with a bun; or leisurely enjoy them in the restaurant.

With pancakes or French toasts, sprinkled with finely chopped mushrooms or onions or bell peppers, with a zigzagging line of dill honey mustard or ketchup or mayonnaise—however you want them, whenever you want them.

Eschew the regular, jumbo and cheese that comprise many Filipinos' sorry state of hotdog vocabulary. The real deal is here, and it's fittingly called Top Dog.

Any alumnus of the University of California Berkeley should be familiar with the name or they'd never really been to UCB, said the man who brought the dogs to the country, Michael C. Wong.

"Eating Top Dog is part of campus survival in UCB. It's like a cult. Everybody loves it," Wong said.

Born in Hong Kong and raised in San Francisco, California, Wong studied business in UCB. He remembered having a dog on each hand, wolfing down both quickly, downing them with a glass of Coke, before running off to the next class.

It was the only way to eat them, at least for him, he said. To this day he still prefers to have two dogs, one on each hand.

A rarity

Founded by Dick Riemann, Top Dog opened in Berkeley in 1966, during a home football game. A dog with natural casing was then hard to come by.

Riemann, who had German roots, wanted to make the authentic German sausages available for everyone to enjoy. It was a hit on opening day. People snapped up the dog in less than 15 minutes. The rest, as they say, is history.

Top Dog has set up shop on the ground floor of the SM Mall of Asia main mall promenade, directly in front of Hypermart. Its industrial façade is reminiscent of San Francisco markets since Wong want to put a little of the hippy San Fo mood into the rigid mall ambience. The Manila branch, he said, is thus far the most handsome in the world.

Making sausages the way they are meant to be—from quality ingredients, aroma and texture to looks, snap and flavor—Top Dog is a company that aims to make the average Pinoy and Pinay more hotdog savvy.

Asking price for the bestseller Top Dog, the all-American franks, is only P62. Have French toasts on the side with homemade syrup and you get a filling meal for only P94.

The all-beef Louisiana-style sausage with four types of chili peppers called Hot Link is only P58. Eat this fiery serving as a sandwich for P68; with pancake for P89; with rice for P76.

MICHAEL Wong, right, with business parter Dennis Huang CHITO VECINA

"We want people to be filled up for value. We serve customers quality food at everyday prices. You don't need to go to a hotel or attend a fancy sausage festival to savor quality food," Wong said.

Personal attention

Wong personally prepares the sausages from scratch in his kitchen, a skill he learned from Riemann himself, making enough to supply the restaurant for a couple of days. This way freshness is guaranteed. Food is grilled and smoked on the spot.

The dogs contain no chemicals, artificial fillers or MSG, and the casing is natural. The variety of combinations, of course, is tailored for the Philippine market.

There is no secret to keeping the prices as low as possible. Crew is at a minimum, three or four, including Wong (although this proficient staff can do 100 hotdogs in 15 minutes if required). Ceiling fans are used to keep electricity cost low. Like US fast-food outlets, customers are encouraged to clean up after a meal.

Top Dog also brings the best sausage offering from across the globe. You can have the Austrian Bratwurst, the all-pork classic Polish Kielbasa; or Garlic, the traditional German sausage that's 1/3 beef and 2/3 pork.

Cold dogs are also available, ordered in advance, should customers want to do their own grilling at home.

If Wong is around, and he usually is, customers drowning in a sea of choices get an abbreviated Sausages 101 course. The uninitiated may find the casing tough or the meat chewy. But that's because only the real ingredients—gut and meat—are used.

"Never buy a straight sausage. Dogs are supposed to curl given the natural curve of their casing. They're not colored either. You're supposed to see the spices inside, with the shade of meat colors. Please, never slice them open when cooking," Wong said.

Acknowledging that Filipinos cannot live on dogs alone, Wong, whose wife is Filipino, decided early on to offer hefty meals as well. There's Grandma Chicken Meal, a recipe straight from his grandmother's kitchen.

Omelet Delight Meals are also served: Hot Tamale Meal (P94), with Hotlink; Austrian Meal (P93), with Bratwurst; Crab Meat Meal (P118); Salmon Meal (P128); Smoked Tanguigue Meal (P123); Spanish Vegan Meal (P89).

Top Dog is a "green" business, avoiding the use of styrofoam for take-out, among others. It pays P1 out of every order if customers bring their own containers for to-go orders.

Just two months after opening, Wong said there had been many repeat customers. He hopes that Filipinos would someday gobble up the dogs the way they do in San Fo.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph.

'Pandesal' turning into a munchkin

By Linda B. Bolido

THE FILIPINOS' FAVORITE BREAD, THE *pandesal*, may be shrinking into a munchkin.

Former Sen. Ernesto Herrera, secretary general of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines, says the bread is now 30-percent lighter than it was three years ago.

Herrera says the P1 *pandesal*, which the government declared in 2003 should not be less than 25 g, may now be down to 17.5 g.

In other words, consumers may be paying the same price but they are not getting the same product.

Not that the problem is really new. Actually, this is a favorite trick of many establishments. Knowing that any mention of an increase in price is anathema to consumers, they resort to volume reduction.

So, in restaurants, while your favorite dishes may still cost the same, you probably do not get as much of them as before. Servings have been scaled down.

What used to overflow from a plate may now fit into a saucer or, as some wise guy put it, a platelet. Fancy presentation may make a dish look like it is still the same but a hollower feeling in the stomach may suggest otherwise.

This is exactly what Herrera is saying. Consumers may be "losing value for their money in the face of surging inflation."

The TUCP official has warned of "stealth inflation," or indirect consumer price increases through subtle "content reduction." He says "stealth inflation" is not reflected as a price increase, but through "less discernible cutbacks in the quantity or volume of the commodity" sold for the same old price.

The situation requires consumers to be even more vigilant not just in ensuring that their *pandesal* follows standards but other commodities, too, prime or otherwise.

Liquefied petroleum gas, for instance, is always a favorite subject for tricks like this. Even during normal times, there are always some traders who will try to raise their profits some more by giving customers less than what they pay for.

There are government agencies, both local and national, that have the responsibility to make sure traders follow rules. If you feel you are not getting value for money, do not hesitate to let the authorities know.

Feedback

Reader Ana Marie Atayan shares this cautionary tale with other consumers. Her experience makes it clear you should always give yourself sufficient time when sending packages because things can go wrong even with so-called express delivery.

THE CONSUMER

Atayan sent a box of wedding essentials to her sister in Ireland through Federal Express (FedEx). The courier company, according to her, said it would take no more than two to three working days as they had a direct flight to Connemara, Galway, the package's destination.

Fortunately the wedding was scheduled for Sept. 23. The package she sent Sept. 2 made a side trip to the United States where Customs, she was told, kept it for two days before it was eventually shipped to Ireland. The package finally arrived in Ireland on Sept. 8 and the recipient got it Sept. 14.

Moral of the story? Don't cut it too close when sending packages even if the courier service guarantees express delivery.

Our regular columnist, Marietta V. Giron, is indisposed. Please send letters to The Consumer, Lifestyle Section, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Mascardo and Yague Sts., Makati City; PO Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati; or e-mail lbolido@inquirer.com.ph —Editor

New hypermarket in Pasig City

THE SM HYPERMARKET RECENTLY opened its ninth branch at SM Supercenter Pasig.

Patterned after the European hypermarket concept, SM Hypermarket combines a carefully selected range of food and merchandise.

The hypermarket has spacious aisles, dynamic presentation of merchandise, efficient check-out service, and a walkalator allowing people to wheel down their purchases in shopping carts straight to the parking area.

PINK salmon steak

The store features new design concepts, including eye-catching graphics and attractive mesh sticker signages; choicest cuts at the meat and poultry section, fresh seafood and fruits and veggies, and a wide range of dairy and deli items.

Apart from fresh food, the hypermarket's *takal-takal* section allows customers to buy rice, dry condiments and seasonings, processed meats, seafood, vegetables, and fruits in smaller portions. Detergent and dog food are also available in *takal-takal*.

The new hypermarket also sells food to go, prepared items like roast chicken, *pata hamon*, and California *maki* and *sushi*. At the bakery section, breads and pastries are available hot from the oven.

CALIFORNIA Maki (P85) at Taste Asia in SM Supercenter Pasig

Taste Asia, a concept pioneered at the SM Mall of Asia, lets shoppers enjoy Filipino, Chinese, Japanese and Asian fusion cuisine by having their purchases cooked at the lobby area.

Every P500 purchase at the hypermarket entitles a customer to a raffle coupon for a chance to win P1 million in the Shop 'n' Win! monthly draws.

The recent SM Hypermarket opening was attended by Pasig Rep. Robert Jaworski Jr., Vice Mayor Rosalio Martinez, Councilors Andy Santiago and Boy Raymundo.

Felicidad Sy, SM Supermarket SVP for marketing Herbert Sy and SM Prime Holdings president Hans Sy welcomed the guests.

Funky Fresh, the first runner-up in the Rexona First Day High Cheering Competition, performed. Customers participated in several games.

The new SM Hypermarket is at SM Supercenter Pasig on E. Rodriguez Avenue.

Cooking for the holidays ahead

CLASSES

THE REGGIE ASPIRAS SCHOOL OF Culinary Arts is organizing the following classes: *Manang* Rocks for Christmas (holiday cooking classes for household cooks/helpers); Entertaining for the Holidays (The Catering Series—for caterers and those who love to entertain); Things to Make, Give or Sell this Christmas. Also offered are: Oct. 9—*Kanin na Ulam Pa!* (all new)—Ube Paella, Sisig Rice, Lechon Kawali and Monggo Rice, Boneless Crispy Pata and Chicharon Rice, Dulong Paella with Mixed Seafood. Oct. 11—Cockadoodledoo! Chicken '06 (all new)—Roast Chicken with Foie Gras and Truffle Sauce, Chicken Wellington, Best-Ever Chinese-style Fried Chicken, Mango Curry, Oriental-style Garlic Chicken, Bourbon Chicken Barbecue; side dishes. Oct. 13—Delicious Fancy Salads (all new)—Millionaire's Salad of Lobster, Foie Gras and Duck Confit; Foie Gras Salad on Homemade Ginger Bread Loaf; Cold Noodle and Prawn Salad with sesame mayo cream dressing; Roasted Pear, Beef with Paella of Couscous; Tiger Prawn Salad with Gazpacho. Call 9289296, 9273008, 6335162.

Buffet spread

Dorothy's Cooking School will conduct a class on brownies Oct. 11, while a class on buffet spread featuring chicken gallantina, black paella and roast beef with orange sauce is scheduled on Oct. 14. In the afternoon, a class on desserts including pistachio cookie cups, macadamia fudge brownies, orange tiramisu and other baked favorites will be conducted. A new class on breads and dips will be held on Oct. 17, while homebaked breads such as whole-wheat cinnamon roll and *ensaymada* with *dulce de leche* will be covered on Oct. 18. Call 7217735 and 4167968. Dorothy's Cooking School is owned by culinary expert and cookbook author Dorothy Ferreria.

VIA MARE chefs Benjamin Zabala, Rodito Dimatera, Isabel Locsin and Nieves Margarita Ong, with an unidentified Muscovite guest, apparently a fan of their cooking, who rushed forward to join the photo-op

FILIPINO products on display during the Flavors of the Philippines Food Festival

From RP, with love

FAÇADE of the Gubernatorsky Restaurant, where the Flavors of the Philippines Food Festival was held

FOOD servers Luda and Sasha in their barong-inspired uniforms

Text and photos by Gibbs Cadiz

A first-ever Flavors of the Philippines Food Festival whets the appetite of Russian travelers for Philippine attractions

THE RUSSIANS ARE ON THE march.

After nearly 70 years of travel and lifestyle restrictions, some 24.5 million people from the Russian Federation traveled abroad in 2004, putting the country on track to become the 10th largest tourist source by 2020.

And when they travel, Russians spend big—bigger than the average tourists, according to the World Tourism Organization. Russians are now the eighth top tourist spenders in the world, with some US$15.7 billion spent for international travel in 2004. They are also more discriminating, preferring luxury accommodations, prestige resorts and exotic cuisine over mass-market enticements.

The Philippine Department of Tourism sees Russia as another bright spot in its efforts to bring foreign visitors to local shores. In 2005, around 10,200 Russians traveled to the Philippines. That's still way below Thailand's figures in 2004, which was 79,400.

But the Philippines, if it plays its cards right, has a fighting chance in the market, mainly because surveys have shown that the new-moneyed Russians are in constant search of sun-and-beach holidays in upscale destinations. At present, they head to Turkey and Egypt or Thailand and India.

RUSSIANS lining up for the Filipino food prepared by Via Mare

Hearty eaters

It's not just first-rate accommodations and pristine sights that the Philippines is touting to Russian travelers. There's also Filipino cuisine. Russians, after all, enjoy a worldwide reputation as hearty eaters.

In conjunction with the Philippine presence at the recent Moscow Leisure Fair, the first-ever Flavors of the Philippines Food Festival was held at the elegant Gubernatorsky Restaurant in a heavily guarded part of the city. (The street where the resto is located is adjacent to the Moscow mayor's office, and the establishment itself is owned by the government. An ordinary meal at Gubernatorsky costs about 60 euros, or P3,600).

Glenda Barretto's Via Mare catered the food, and various Philippine products were on display for the length of the five-day food festival, such as Figaro coffee, Dole preserved fruits, Tanduay wines and cigars, and local sweets and candies.

On the opening night of the festival, the Gubernatorsky's main function room overflowed with some 300 Russian government officials, travel industry leaders, and other invitees mixing with the Filipino delegates.

Philippine dishes were available on order throughout the night and for the next four days at the resto, with menus specially prepared in Russian and English.

Among the most ordered dishes were Pancit Molo (Stuffed Noodles with Shrimp, Pork, Chicken and Ham), Bistek Tagalog (Beef Tenderloin with Lemon & Onions), Grilled Chicken Ensaladang Suha, Labanos at Hipon Pomelo (Radish Salad), Ensaladang Talong (Grilled Eggplant in Coco-Ginger Vinaigrette), Lumpia Binondo (Eggrolls of Minced Shrimps and Pork), Bulalo (Beef Shank and Onion Broth), and Mangga at Sorbetes (Mango Jubilee).

These dishes were prepared by Via Mare chefs Benjamin Zabala, Rodito Dimatera, Isabel Locsin and Nieves Margarita Ong. To provide a further touch of Filipino charm and hospitality to the proceedings, the Bayanihan Dance Company performed a suite of dances while the guests had their dinner.

Cigars and rhum

On the third day of the festival, Philippine cigars and spirits were the focus, as an elite Russian social club that regularly met at Gubernatorsky hosted a reception for its members to savor Philippine-made Flor Fina cigars and Tanduay Superior Rhum.

Of the 70 members who attended the "cigar salon" and who ordered food and drinks totaling 5,000 rubles, three were picked out for special prizes during a raffle.

The three were Artashes Shirikian, publisher of the magazine "Cigar Clan" and main organizer of the cigar salon; Dr. Oleg Teodorovich, chief of the Central Clinic; and Ludmila Loseva, press secretary of the deputy chair of the Russian Congress.

Loseva won the main prize, a travel package to the Philippines, with accommodations in El Nido, Badian, Plantation Bay and Hotel Philippine Plaza, plus airfare courtesy of Qatar Airways and Philippine Airlines.

Accepting her prize, she expressed excitement to be coming to the Philippines, and said she would definitely spread the word to her party members and fellow Russians.

High-end hideaways

The Philippines' participation in the recent Leisure "Otdykh" Fair primarily aimed to place high-end Filipino attractions side by side with these established tourist hideaways.

As Verna Buensuceso, DOT's head of Team Europe, explained, "We would like to project the Philippines as trend destination, not as a mass-market spot. For this, we would like to highlight our more high-end attractions such as exclusive resorts, spa facilities, extensive shopping options, the rich and varied culture of our provinces, and our food."

Among the Philippine establishments that joined DOT in the Moscow Fair were El Nido Resorts, Plantation Bay and Badian Island Resorts, as well as the Spa Association of the Philippines and Philippine Airlines.

Poch Azucena, GSA relations manager of Philippine Airlines, said he was surprised at the level of knowledge of ordinary Russians about the Philippines.

"They know a lot about us. They've heard about Cebu, Davao, Tagbilaran, Palawan. I was surprised at the thirst of the Russians for new destinations, and especially their interest in our country."

E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph, visit www.gibbscadiz.com

ELEGANT interiors of the Gubernatorsky Restaurant

Free recipe book for 'suki'

COLLECT 15 STICKERS IN THE MVP Kitchen Companion Promo and get a free exclusive recipe book from Monterey.

The promo is open to all Monterey MVP cardholders.

Present your MVP card at your nearest Monterey Neighborhood Meatshop to get the promo card. Fill up the card with your name, address, contact numbers, e-mail address and signature and begin collecting stickers.

With a minimum purchase of P300, plus at least one participating product, you get one sticker.

Participating products are 500 g Monterey Pork Country-Style Tocino, 250 g of any Monterey Lamb product, 500 g Monterey Pata Slice, 500 g Monterey Ground Beef, 500 g Monterey Pork Butterfly Cut, 500 g Monterey Sisig, 500 g Monterey Beef Cubes, 500 g Monterey Ground Pork, P50 worth of any San Miguel product, one whole Magnolia Fresh Chicken, 500 g Monterey Lumpiang Shanghai, P50 worth of non-San Miguel product/s, P500 g Monterey Pork Barbecue skewered.

The MVP Kitchen Companion Cookbook may be redeemed until Dec. 31.

Mooncake festival banquets

DINING OUT

ZNH CHINESE BISTRO IS OFFERING MOONCAKE Festival Banquet Menus until Oct. 8. Available are Emperor's Banquet for 4-5 persons, P3,280; Empress' Banquet for 4-5, P2,980. The Mid-Autumn or Mooncake Festival is one of two major holidays in the Chinese calendar. Chinese around the world also commemorate on this occasion their liberation from Mongol rule in the early 14th century. The message asking the people to revolt was hidden inside mooncakes.

DENCIO'S promises to serve its popular *sisig* within five minutes, or it's free! A server will activate a timer on the guests' table as soon as orders are made. The guarantee applies only to single Pork Sisig or Sisig Supreme orders for dine-in. Visit www.dencios.biz.

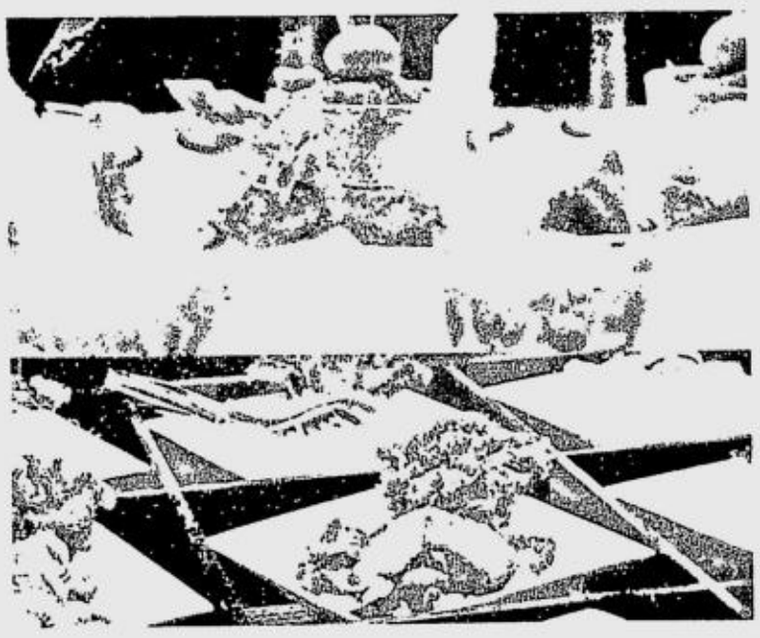
CENTURY Park Hotel offers until Oct. 15 a variety of mooncakes from Hong Kong, China and Singapore such as lotus, assorted fruits, green tea and mixed nuts, at the lobby of CPH. Call 5288888.

HYATT Regency Manila presents Green Tea Festival Oct. 7-21 at Tempura Misono. Dishes include Green Tea Smoked Salmon, Green Tea Steamed Fish Skewer, Crab Salad with Green Tea. The restaurant also offers Green Tea Ice Cream for dessert.

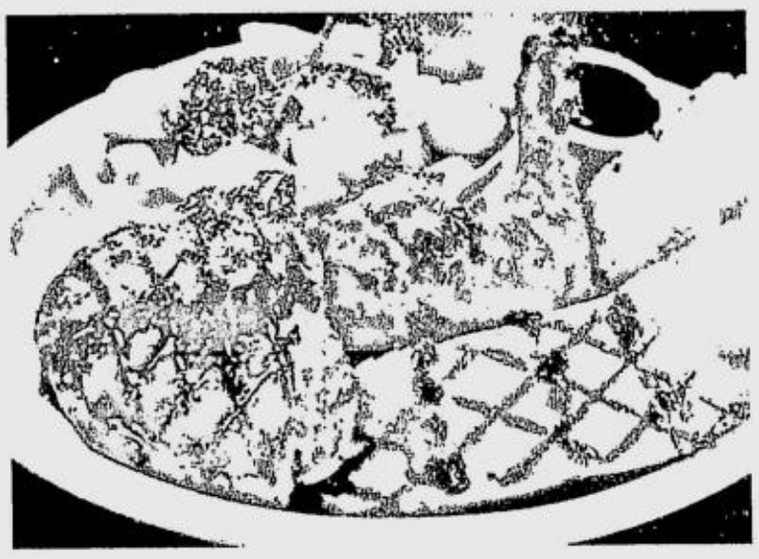
HERITAGE HOTEL presents Taste and Toast of Europe until Oct. 31 at Restaurant Riviera. The festival features Europe's finest cuisine consisting of England's Roast Beef with Yorkshire Puddings and Rack of Lamb with Herb Crust, France's Salmon in Salt Crust, Sautéed Clam with White Wine, Hungary's Beef Goulash, Spain's Gazpacho Andaluz and Paella, among others. The hotel also marks Ramadan with its *halal* selection until Oct. 23, 5:30-10:30 p.m., at Restaurant Riviera. Call 8548888.

DISCOVERY Suites' Restaurant 5 offers dinner buffet Monday-Friday, 6-10 p.m. The buffet selections include fresh salad station, assorted sushi and sashimi, dim sum, a selection of international hot dishes, a carvings station with different kinds of meats daily, and the chef's soup of the day. Every meal is capped with a sweet dessert and a choice of premium coffee or freshly brewed tea.

THE PHILIPPINE Plaza Hotel's Spiral presents Sunday brunch. Enjoy the refreshing view of the bay as you dine on grills and barbecues, pizza and freshly made pasta dishes, ice cream with all the trimmings, candies and chocolates. The Chinese cooking theater offers dim sums while the Indian corner has curries, *tandoori* vegetables and fish *tikkas*, *rotis*, mango chutney and yoghurt sauces. You can have pasta and pizza at the Mediterranean section. Chocolate lovers can dip fresh fruits in two chocolate fountains. For drinks, try fruit smoothies. Call 5515555 local 1086.



CHINESE NOODLE STATION
Hotel Philippine Plaza features Shrimp and Pomelo Marie Rose and Smoked Salmon, Jelly Avocado Soup and Salmon Eggs



COMBOS OF THREE
T.G.I.Friday's is offering Triple Barrel Combos until January. Choose from Jack Daniel's Triple-Barrel Salmon, Chicken & Chop; Jack Daniel's Triple-Barrel Ribs, Chop & Shrimp; or Jack Daniel's Triple-Barrel Ribs, Chicken & Shrimp. Also available is Jack Daniel's Triple-Barrel Chicken, Chop & Shrimp. Each order is big enough for sharing. Char-grilled and glazed with sweet, smoky Jack Daniel's sauce, each combination comes with vegetable and pasta medley, tossed in a light bechamel sauce and served with buttered corn on the cob. The Triple Barrel Combos are available at T.G.I.Friday's branches in Glorietta 3; Robinsons Place Malate; Tomas Morato, Quezon City; Alabang Town Center; and Sta. Lucia East.

Recipes from paradise

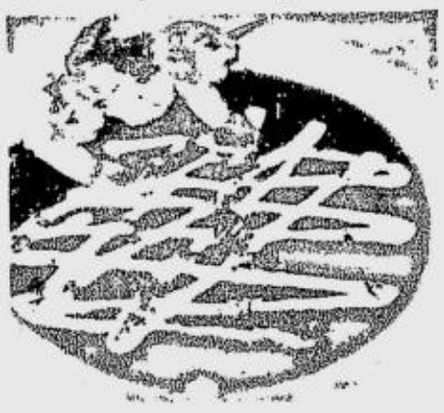
KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

I JUST ARRIVED FROM beautiful Panglao Nature Island Resort in Bohol where I did some work. Work that seemed more like being on holiday in paradise, to me!

Powder-like sand, fish and starfish by my feet; snorkeling in a forest of corals just five minutes by boat; a spa with a two-page roster of treatments that ranged from the exotic to the traditional *hilot*, with an option to have the treatments by the sea and, soon, by the forest; a private Jacuzzi and indoor garden shower... All this made Panglao a decadent experience.

BOHOL treats. Star Peanut Cookies, Ube Kalamay and Kalamay



UBE Soup

Wherever I go, I make it a point to discover homegrown cuisine and produce. To my delight, Bohol delivered—*ube*, *kalamay* and peanuts in abundance in all conceivable variants like cookies, *barquillos*, kisses, Star cookies, *polvoron*.

Part of the task was to create recipes using these endemic ingredients. I am sharing some of them with you. A lot of it is purple... but who does not love the color purple?

For a grand time and all the picturesque memories, I must thank the Ongs: Tito Fred, Tita Babs and RG. What a grand job you do giving people a taste of paradise!

Oh! And if you are ever in Tagbilaran and in search of a good and reliable place to dine, visit Asiatika. They serve Asian comfort food that will not disappoint. Their eggplant, shrimp and pork salad is so *sarap*!

Ube Soup

½ c butter
¾ kg sweet potatoes, peeled
½ kg *ube*
2 tbsp golden-brown sugar

Mix butter with sweet potatoes and *ube*. Coat with brown sugar. Bake until tubers are soft.

6 tbsp butter
1/3 c bacon
¼ c onions
2 c leeks, chopped
1/3 c finely chopped celery
10 c chicken broth

Sauté bacon and onions in butter. Add leeks, celery, baked *ube* and sweet potatoes. Add stock and process.

Season to taste with salt and pepper. Before serving, add in 1/3 c butter and process with a stick blender. Dribble with citrus cream and lay shrimp skewers to garnish.

Shrimps skewers for garnish:

1 kg shrimps, peeled, de-veined, sautéed in olive oil, salt and pepper

Skewer Shrimps:

Citrus cream for garnish
½ c whipping cream
¼ c sour cream
½ tsp minced peeled fresh ginger
1 tsp grated orange peel
2 tsp minced parsley

Mix. Set aside.

Ube Flan

Caramel:

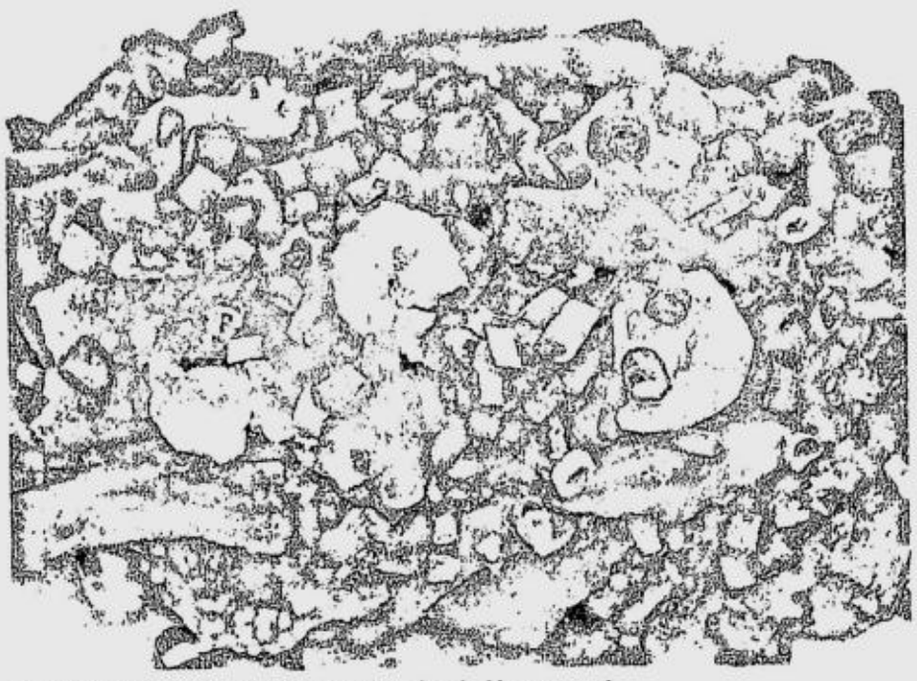
1/3 c sugar
2/3 c water

Caramelize sugar and water in a saucepan. Pour in to mold. Make filling by mixing ingredients below.

Steam for 30 minutes covered with foil.

1 c sugar
1 c milk
1 1/3 c evaporated milk
6 large eggs
¼ tsp salt
1½ c steamed and mashed *ube*
2 tbsp rum
¼ tsp ground allspice

Mix in a bowl. Pour on mold lined with caramel.



ASIATIKA'S eggplant, shrimp and pork salad is so *sarap*!

Suman sa Lihiya with Two Sauces: Kalamay and Ube Kalamay

4 c glutinous Thai rice
3 c water
½ tsp salt
1 tbsp lye

Wash rice. Drain. Add lye and mix well to coat well.

Cook rice and water in a wok, until water is absorbed. Wrap in banana leaf. Steam for 20 minutes.

Kalamay sauce:

1 c coconut milk, second extraction
½ c *kalamay* or ½ c *ube kalamay* if making *ube* sauce
1/3 c coconut milk, first extraction
Pinch of salt

Bring coconut milk and *kalamay* to a boil, mixing with a whisk.

Add *kakang-gata* and a pinch of salt. Bring to one boil. Serve with *suman*.

White Kuchinta with Kalamay Sauce

¾ c sugar
¾ c + 2 tbsp all-purpose flour
1 3/4 c water
1 tsp *apog*
1 tsp *lihia*

Mix ingredients until well blended. Pour into greased mini muffin molds.

Steam 12 minutes or until set. Serve with sauce.

Use same sauces for *suman*.

Peanut and Ube Cheese Cake

½ c graham crackers, pounded
4 tbsp melted butter
1½ c Star peanuts, pounded

Combine and mix well. Press on to nine-inch pan.

½ c boiling water
2 tbsp unflavored gelatin
1 c cream cheese, softened
½ c boiled mashed *ube*
2 c sour cream
2 c Pour and Whip, whipped and measured, or whipped cream
1 ¾ c powdered sugar

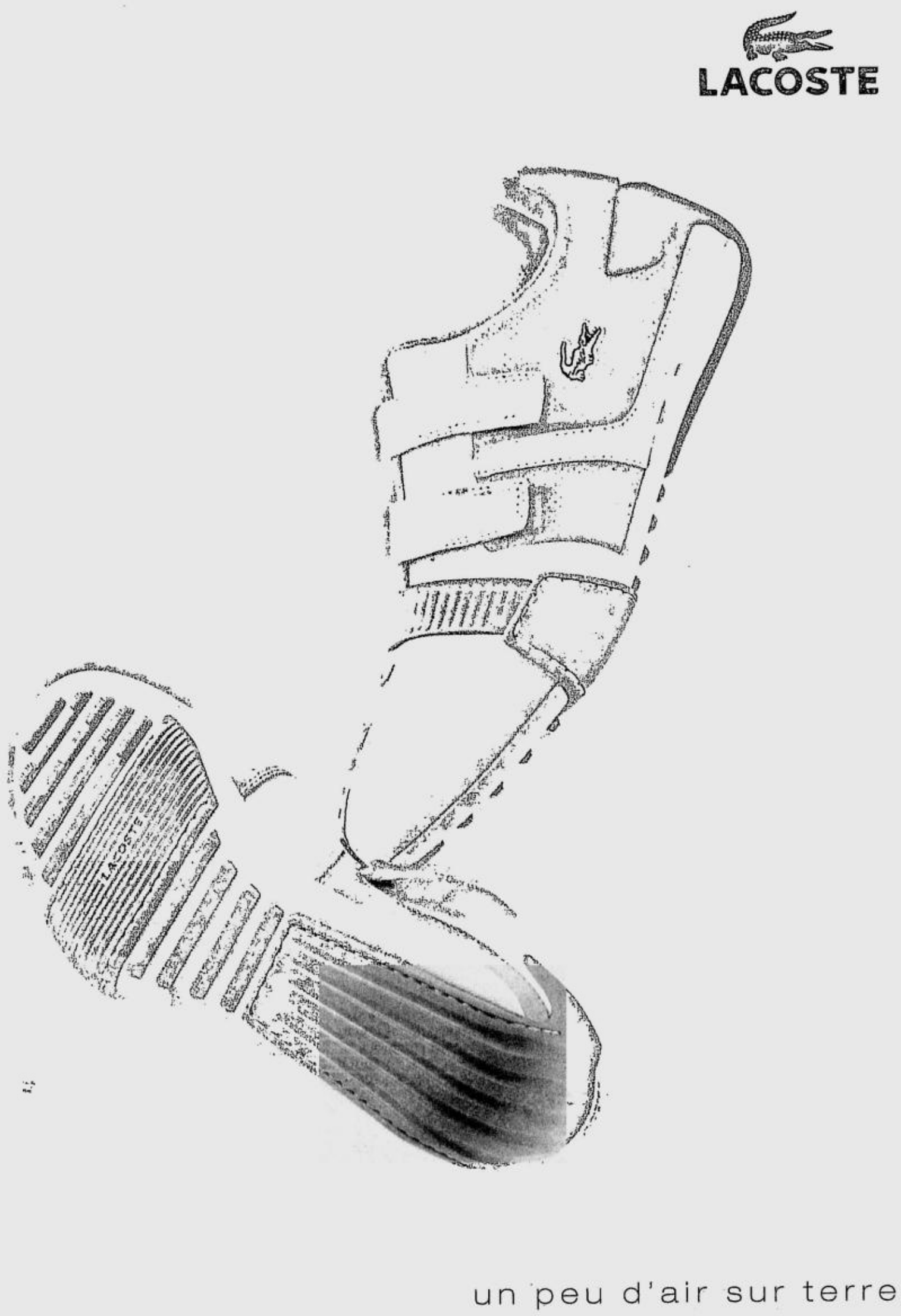
Mix boiling water and gelatin until gelatin is dissolved. Combine cream cheese to gelatin mixture.

Add rest of the ingredients except Pour and Whip. Mix well. Fold in whipped cream or Pour and Whip.

Pour into baking pan. Refrigerate until set. Garnish with mint or *pandan* leaf, *ube* jam and Star cookies.

Asiatika Restaurant—(38) 4112597. Bohol pasalubongs are available at BQ Mall in Tagbilaran while the Star Peanut Cookies are now in SM. For direct orders, call (38) 4113164. Call Panglao Nature Island Resort at (920) 9520134.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph.



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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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'Idol' suspends first elimination round

'Milenyo' gives finalists one more week to compete

APPLE Chiu

GIANCARLO Magdangal

ARMARIE Cruz

MIGUEL Mendoza

STEF Lazaro

POW Chavez

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esperas

PHILIPPINE IDOL," ABC 5's singing talent search program, canceled its first elimination round last Sunday due to technical glitches brought about by super typhoon "Milenyo."

This made the Philippines the fifth country in "Idol" history to cancel its scheduled eviction after local producers decided not to vote off any contestant that night due to the destruction of major electric and communication lines in Luzon in the aftermath of the typhoon.

According to Sheldon Bailey, "Idol" consulting producer, similar cases happened in season 2 of "American Idol," season 4 of "French Idol," season 1 of "Armenian Idol" and season 2 of "Pan-Arabic Idol."

The "Idol" franchises all cited technical problems.

"There were cases of human error in other 'Idol' shows," said Perci Intalan, ABC 5 Creative and Entertainment Production head. "I just pray this won't happen to us."

But last week, Intalan said the voting team of "Philippine Idol" experienced difficulties when telecommunication networks failed to confirm receipt of text votes.

"The votes will still be counted for this week," he stressed.

In order to give everyone a fair chance, the organizers decided that finalists Armarie Cruz, Mau Marcelo, Jeli Mateo, Pow Chavez, Stef Lazaro, Apple Chiu, Gian Magdangal, Ken Dingle, Drae Ybanez, Reymond Sajor, Jan Nieto and Miguel Mendoza be given one more week to compete. The two contestants with the least number of votes will be eliminated this weekend.

Last Saturday's show will be aired tonight, from 7 to 9:30, for viewers who failed to watch it because of the power outage.

The special episode will be titled "Ano Talaga Nangyari Last Weekend (What Really Happened Last Weekend)?"

KEN Dingle

MAU Marcelo

JAN Nieto

REYMOND Sajor

JELI Mateo

DRAE Ybañez

CHEER FACTOR

Intruder alert

NEW YORK—PAparazzi, beware. George Clooney has a plan to put celeb-snapping photographers out of business.

"Here is my theory on debunking photographs in magazines, you know, the paparazzi photographs," Clooney says in the November issue of Vanity Fair, on newsstands Oct. 10. "I want to spend every single night for three months going out with a different famous actress. You know, Halle Berry one night, Salma Hayek the next, and then walk on the beach holding hands with Leonardo DiCaprio.

"People would still buy the magazines, they'd still buy the pictures, but they would always go, 'I don't know if these guys were putting us on or not," says the 45-year-old actor-director. *AP*

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2 THE DEPARTED
3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
4 PULSE
5 FLY BOYS
6 TWILIGHT DANCERS
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 STEP UP
9 DEAD OR ALIVE
10 ZOOM

ERMITA 638-7609 to 12

1 THE DEPARTED
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
STEP UP
3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
4 PULSE
5 TWILIGHT DANCERS
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 FLY BOYS

METRO EAST 682-8193 – 682-8199

1 THE DEPARTED
2 STEP UP
3 THE BREED
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 ZOOM
6 PULSE
7 FLY BOYS
8 DEAD OR ALIVE

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 936-3229-30

1 THE DEPARTED
2 PULSE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 FLY BOYS

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE DEPARTED
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 PULSE
4 FLY BOYS

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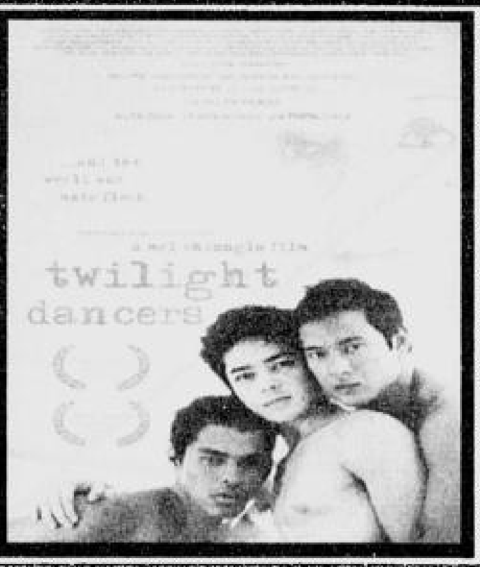
Twilight Dancers offers a disturbing yet humurous look at Philippine social realities through the eyes of three macho dancers. Dwight, young and at the peak of his trade, loses the girl he loves to a politician's son Alfred, at 28, is past his prime and is kicked out of the club when the film starts. Bert, 30, has long since given up dancing, and is now the bodyguard-driver of a corrupt yet jolly businesswoman, Madame Loca.

starring:
Cherry Pie Picache, Allen Dizon, Lauren Novero and Tyron Perez

MTRCB Rating: R-18
For Screening Schedule, pls. contact our CINEMA ACCESS 635-5555 or visit us www.robinsonsmovieworld.com



STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
3 FLY BOYS
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 ZOOM
3 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 POSSESSED BY EVIL
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 ZOOM

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE DEPARTED
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188

1 THE DEPARTED
2 PULSE
3 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-6270

1 THE DEPARTED
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS
5 SNAKES ON A PLANE
6 THE WICKER MAN

BACOLOD (034) 441-0463 (034) 441-0459

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
5 CRANK

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 SCOOP
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS

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in cooperation with: Da Best 98.5 My Favorite!
Per DTI Batangas Permit No. 247 Series of 2006

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•Oct 25 STICK IT
•Nov 1 INVINCIBLE
•Nov 22 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

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T-REX
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ANT BULLY
3:30PM
SUPERMAN RETURNS
5:30PM Admission Price- P350
1 DEAD OR ALIVE
2 PULSE
3 THE DEPARTED
4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
5 FLY BOYS
6 STEP UP
PREMIERE CINEMA
FIRST DAY HIGH
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
THE DEPARTED
CENTERSTAGE
ZOOM
CINEMA 1
THE DEPARTED
CINEMA 2
ZOOM
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 THE DEPARTED
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 STEP UP
5 PULSE
6 THE DEPARTED
7 DEAD OR ALIVE
8 FIRST DAY HIGH
9 ZOOM
10 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
11 THE BREED
12 FLY BOYS

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 THE DEPARTED
2 THE BREED
3 PHILIPPINE IDOL
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 STEP UP
6 DEAD OR ALIVE
7 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
8 ZOOM
9 FLY BOYS
10 PULSE
11 POSSESSED BY EVIL
12 WICKER MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SCOOP
2 THE BREED
3 CRANK
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 STEP UP
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 THE DEPARTED
8 ZOOM
9 PULSE
10 YOU ARE THE ONE
11 FLY BOYS
12 MONSTER HOUSE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 THE DEPARTED
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 PULSE
4 STEP UP
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 WICKER MAN
7 THE BREED
8 YOU ARE THE ONE
9 FLY BOYS
10 ZOOM

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 THE DEPARTED
2 PULSE
3 STEP UP
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 THE BREED
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 PULSE
2 THE DEPARTED
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 STEEP UP
6 INGRATA
7 FLY BOYS
8 ZOOM
9 THF BREED

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 THE DEPARTED
2 STEP UP
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 FLY BOYS

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
2 PULSE
3 FLY BOYS
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 FIRST DAY HIGH
6 THE DEPARTED
7 THE BREED
8 ZOOM
9 STEP UP
10 CRANK
11 WICKER MAN
12 POSSESSED BY EVIL

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 REINCARNATION
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 POSSESSED BY EVIL
4 ZOOM

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 THE DEPARTED
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 FLY BOYS

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

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LUZON

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 THE BREED
2 ZOOM
3 THE DEPARTED
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 FLY BOYS
6 FIRST DAY HIGH
7 YOU ARE THE ONE
8 SNAKES ON A PLANE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 THE DEPARTED
2 ZOOM
3 WICKER MAN
4 ZOOM
5 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVERO
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 SNAKES ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 DEAD OR ALIVE
4 SCOOP

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
4 MORTUARY

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 WICKER MAN
2 ZOOM
3 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVERO
4 THE DEPARTED
5 YOU ARE THE ONE
6 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LIPA
1 WICKER MAN
2 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
3 ZOOM
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 ZOOM
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 THE DEPARTED
2 SNAKES ON A PLANE
3 THE BREED
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 THE DEPARTED
3 ZOOM
4 DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 FLY BOYS
2 YOU, ME AND DUPREE
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 ZOOM

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 THE BREED
3 THE DEPARTED
4 SCOOP
5 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
6 WICKER MAN
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
2 RESERVED
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
4 FIRST DAY HIGH
5 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
6 SCOOP
7 RESERVED
8 WICKER MAN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 THE DEPARTED
2 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 DEAD OR ALIVE
5 WICKER MAN
6 THE BREED

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 DEVIL WEARS PRADA
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
4 SCOOP

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHOWTIME EVENT CALENDAR

MAXMEDIA presents
the APO experience

October 27, 2006 • 8:30 pm
Tickets at P800 • P1,100 • P1,325
MEGAMALL Cinema 10
Tickets available at TICKETWORLD 891-5610/ 891-9999

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

DiCaprio, Damon lead double …

From page D6

Danny DeVito, who's new to the area, sets out to create the gaudiest, most flamboyant light display for miles around. But Matthew Broderick is traditional and conservative, and sabotages the efforts of his "tasteless" neighbor across the street.

This story rings a bell locally, because we have entire *neighborhoods* that go gaga over excessively brilliant and outrageous light displays—not only at Christmas, but for many weeks before. So, empathy is assured when we get to watch "Deck the Halls" at year's end!

For another change of pace, "The Covenant" is a supernatural thriller that tells the story of four young students bound by their sacred ancestry. As descendants of the original families who settled in Ipswich County, in the 1600s (around the time of the Salem witch trials), the boys have all been born with their ancestors' supernatural powers, which include the ability to shape-shift and defy gravity.

When a fifth descendant moves to town, secrets begin to unravel which threaten to break the covenant of silence that has protected their families for hundreds of years. Brrrr!

Finally, coming completely out of left field (talk about unique!), the kilometric-titled movie, "Borat: Cultural Learnings of America For Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan" (sic), is currently generating a lot of buzz for its sublimely ridiculous "mockumentary" shot in the States.

Sacha Baron Cohen stars as Borat Sagdiyev, a leading journalist from the state-run TV network, who travels from his home in Kazakhstan to the US to make a documentary. On his cross-country road trip, he meets real people in actual situations—with hysterical consequences.

Described by some critics as an appalling, tasteless, politically incorrect and slanderous film, it initially played to many empty seats at the recent Toronto film festival. Later, however, SRO crowds showed up and laughed helplessly throughout the movie, due to its sustained outrageousness.

Royal concert

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary celebration of Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej's accession to the throne, the CCP and the Royal Thai Embassy are presenting "A Concert of Royal Compositions," a performance by the Bangkok Symphony Orchestra.

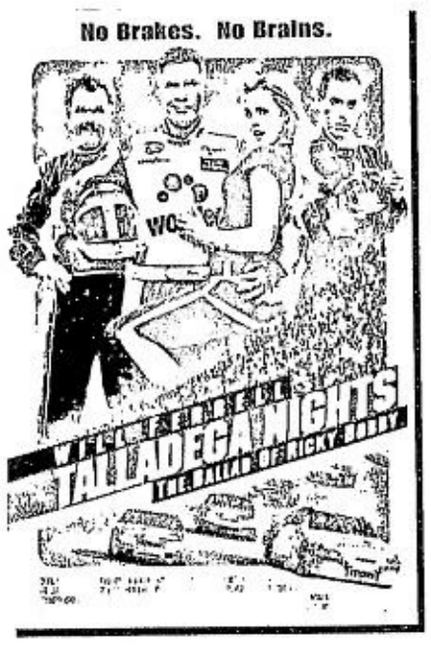
The concert will be held at 8 p.m. on Oct. 11 at the CCP's Main Theater. It will feature 16 compositions by the Thai king, a renowned musician, composer, arranger and performer. His songs range from classical to jazz and contemporary.

No Brakes. No Brains.

NOW SHOWING

at the

SHANG CINEPLEX



MTRCB RATING R-13

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 — ZOOM // FLY BOYS — 11:20, 1:15, 3:10 // 5:00, 7:50, 10:35 — GP//PG-13

CINEMA 2 — PULSE — 12:40, 2:45, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00 — R13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 — THE DEPARTED — 12:40, 3:45, 6:50, 9:55 — R-13

CINEMA 4 — TALLADEGA NIGHTS — 12:40, 3:15, 5:45, 8:15, 10:40 — R-13

CINEMA 5 — THE DEPARTED — 10:20, 1:25, 4:30, 7:35, 10:40 — R-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

T·E·A·T·R·O
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

OCT 07, 2006	AKAPELLAS	8:00 PM
OCT 13, 2006	[illegible]	8:00 PM
EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY	CERRUDO .. CLASSICO	8:00PM
OCT 05, 12, 29, 26	ISAY ALVAREZ & ROBERT SENA	8:30 PM
OCT. 7, 14, 21, 2006	AYEN LAUREL & RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:00 PM

FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722 4532 | OC 116

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

1 STEP UP — 1:05, 3:05, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 — PG-13

2 THE DEPARTED — 1:55, 5:05, 8:15, 11:15 — R-13

3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS — 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 — R13

4 FLYBOYS — 1:45, 4:45, 7:45, 10:50 — PG-13

For inquiries, call 687-6963

GUARANTEED SEATS

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE DEPARTED — MTRCB R-13 — 12:30, 3:40, 6:50, 10:00

2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS — MTRCB R-13 — 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

3 GERMAN FILM FEST

4 PULSE — (Subject for MTRCB Rating) — 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40, 9:45

PREMIERE THEATRE — ZOOM — MTRCB GP — 1:30, 3:30, 5:30 / STEP UP — MTRCB PG-13 — 7:30, 10:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

MONDAY AND TUESDAY SPECIALS

On Mondays and Tuesdays, starting August 14, enjoy special prices of P99.00 for Cinemas 1-4 P120 for the Premiere Theatre (exclusive of food and drinks)

Not applicable to selected movies, on holidays, sneak previews and and in conjunction w/ other Shang Cineplex discounts and promos. Specials last until Nov. 14, 2006. See posters and flyers for details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-0608, Series of 2006

Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 11 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

#1 MOVIE IN MANILA

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3RD WEEK

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE TRANSPORTER"

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING R-13 | STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND UP

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City — Tel. No: 8981440-41

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PULSE R13 12:30,2:30,4:30, 6:30,8:30	THE DEPARTED R13 2:10,5:10,8:10	TALLADEGA NIGHTS: THE BALLAD OF RICKY BOBBY R13 1:10,3:25,5:40,7:55,10:10
FLYBOYS PG13 1:30,4:20,7:10,10:00	ZOOM G 1:00,3:00,5:00,7:00,9:00	THE DEPARTED R13 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 886-1400 | MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – FREE SEATING – MONDAY-FRIDAY

gloriette | G1 | ALABANG TOWN | AYALA CENTER CEBU | MARKET! MARKET! | Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	2 THE DEPARTED	3 PULSE	4 FIRST DAY HIGH
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	3 THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 TALLADEGA NIGHTS	5 STEP-UP	6 THE DEPARTED	7 PULSE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 STEP-UP	2 THE DEPARTED		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX PELICULA: 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 PULSE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FLYBOYS GUARANTEED SEATS	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS	2 PULSE		
	3 STEP-UP	4 FLYBOYS	5 FIRST DAY HIGH	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 THE DEPARTED	2 SCOOP	3 THE BREED	4 FIRST DAY HIGH
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	2 THE DEPARTED		
	3 FIRST DAY HIGH	4 PULSE	5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm; Greenbell - 752 4853, from 11am to 12mn; Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm; Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324; Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Anson's Exhibit October 5 to 21, 2006	Philippine Robotics (Preliminary) October 5, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Slimmer's Aerodance Marathon October 7, 2006	Fashion & Fragrance Festival October 2 to 5, 2006

GREENBELT — Lounge Nights At Greenbelt 2 October 4, 11, 18 & 25, 2006

Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents THE BOOR & THE PROPOSAL at REP's Globe Theater - September 16 to October 8, 2006. For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM — Homecoming of 21st Asian International Art Exhibition Philippines September 19 to October 1, 2006. For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

ELIJAH WOOD — CLAIRE FORLANI

Ayala Malls CINEMAS

STAND YOUR GROUND ON OCTOBER 11 EXCLUSIVELY AT GLORIETTA 4 & GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

VIVA | BIG BUDDHA RESTAURANT | gloriette | GREENBELT

Christian Bautista Live

Be serenaded by Asia's Pop Idol

Market! Market! — October 8, Sunday — Activity Center, 4pm

Metropoint Mall — October 14, Saturday — Activity Center, 4pm

Alabang Town Center — November 5, Sunday — Town Plaza, 6pm

Pavilion Mall — November 26, Sunday — Bridgeway, 4pm

Gloriette — December 1, Friday — Activity Center, 4pm

gloriette | ALABANG TOWN | MARKET! MARKET! | Metropoint Mall | PAVILION MALL

'The Best of Us' at Teatrino

SHOW TIME

THE RAYMOND LAUCHENGCO AND AYEN Munji Laurel concert billed "The Best of Us" opens Oct. 7 at Teatrino at 8:30 p.m., with repeat performances on Oct. 14 and 21. The two will sing the best of Broadway, standards, blues and OPM.

Raymond popularized the songs, "I Need You Back," "Farewell," "Saan Darating ang Umaga" and "So It's You." He also performed in the musicals "The Fantasticks," "South Pacific," "Romeo and Juliet," "Once on This Island" and "Rama at Sita."

Ayen has released the album "Thankful" and has become a fixture in hotels and music lounges.

Call 636-7776.

Erik goes bossa nova

Erik Santos goes bossa nova in the concert "Still" at Bagaberde, Roxas Boulevard tomorrow, 9 p.m.

Erik will be singing familiar songs arranged in bossa nova style, like the hits of VST and Co. and Michael Bublé. He will also croon his signature songs like "This Is the Moment" and "I Believe I Can Fly" with a bossa nova twist.

Call 671-2303.

Von Trapp concert tour

The voices of the descendants of the famous Von Trapp family, whose story has inspired the Broadway musical and 1965 movie classic "The Sound of Music," fill the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center tomorrow and the Center Stage of SM Mall of Asia on Oct. 7.

"The Von Trapp Children Concert" features traditional and contemporary songs from Sofia, 18, Melanie, 16, Amanda, 15 and Justin von Trapp, 12, great-grandchildren of Capt. Georg Ritter von Trapp, father of the celebrated singing family.

Call 911-5555.

MMTA MOVIE GUIDE

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

NOW SHOWING

CINEPLEX (Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 THE DEPARTED
2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
3 GERMAN FILM FEST
4 PULSE
PREMIERE
ZOOM / STEP UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 THE DEPARTED
2 FLY BOYS
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 ZOOM

stormall (Mandaluyong) tel. 7265150
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 FLY BOYS
5 TWILIGHT DANCERS

metropolis star www.dickitbeuty.com.ph (ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 6433594
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 PULSE
3 THE BREED
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL

THEATRES
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660 6271
1 JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 ZOOM
2 DEAD OR ALIVE
3 THE DEPARTED
4 THE DEPARTED
5 FLY BOYS
6 PULSE
7 FIRST DAY HIGH
8 THE BREED
9 YOU ME & DUPREE
10 STEP UP

Blue Wave Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Nina, Marikina City tel. 9341527
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 PULSE
3 THE DEPARTED
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 THE DEPARTED
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 TWILIGHT DANCERS
5 DEAD OR ALIVE

THE MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 MORTUARY
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 FLY BOYS
3 PULSE

Center Mall Cinema Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4440346)
1 TWILIGHT DANCERS
2 THE DEPARTED

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887-5001 to 03
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 THE DEPARTED
3 TWILIGHT DANCERS
4 STEP UP

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH

EASTWOOD CINEMAS (Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6563 or 72
1 STEP UP
2 THE DEPARTED
3 TALLADEGA NIGHT
4 FLY BOYS

CINEMA 2000 Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 CRANK
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
2 FLY BOYS
3 YOU ME & DUPREE
4 FIRST DAY HIGH

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 THE WICKER MAN

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 CRANK
3 ZOOM
4 THE WICKER MAN

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 SNAKE ON A PLANE
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 STORMBREAKER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 FIRST DAY HIGH
2 BINIBINING K

Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4746
1 CRANK
2 PLEASE CALL

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 CRANK
2 WALANG DAYAAN AKIN ANG MALAKI
3 NAGLALAYAG
4 POSSESSED BY EVIL

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 STAY ALIVE
2 SINFUL NIGHT
3 FIRST DAY HIGH
4 CRANK
5 BUTTERFLY EFFECT-2

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 ZOOM
2 FIRST DAY HIGH
3 THE WICKER MAN
4 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED

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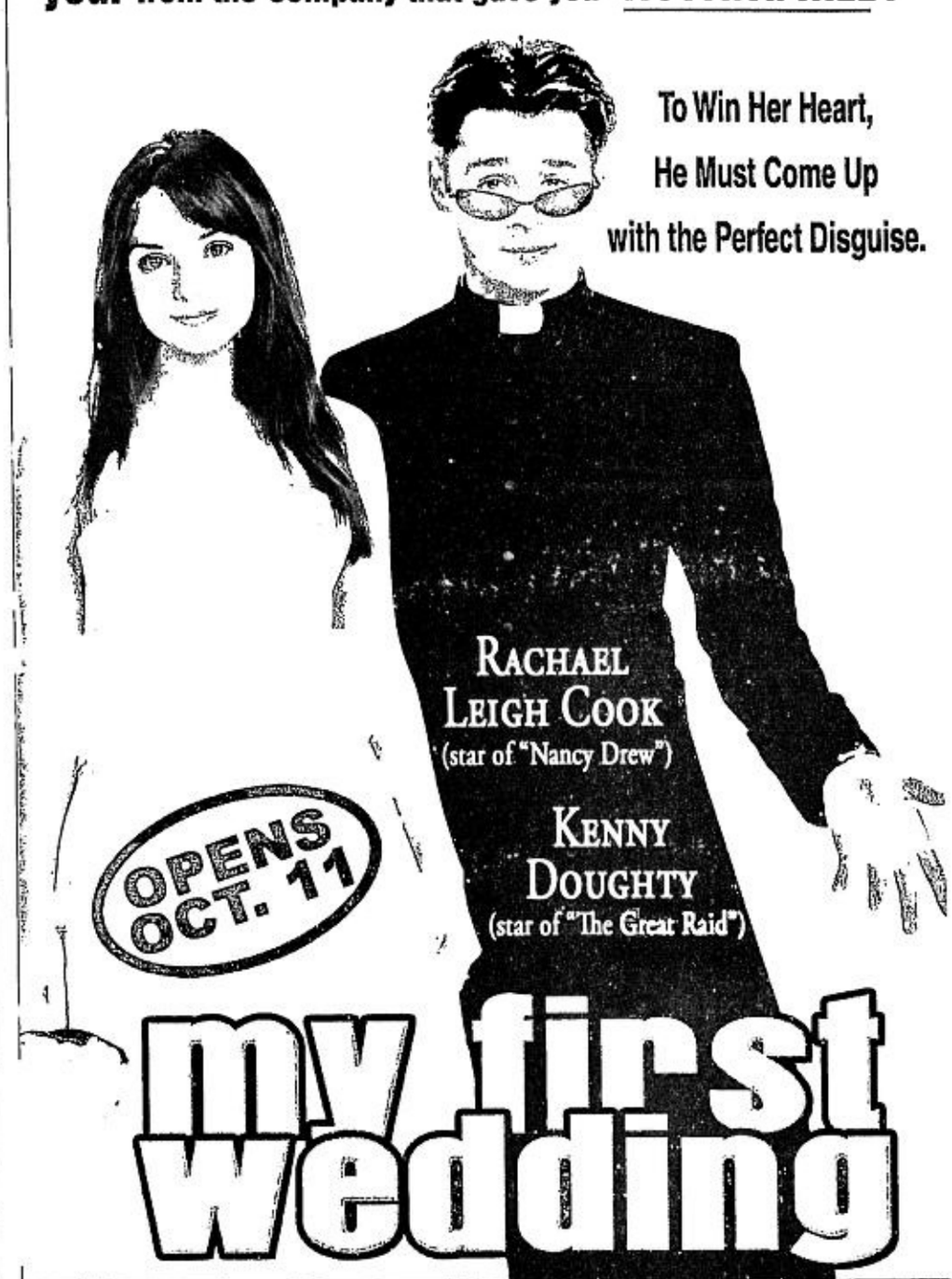
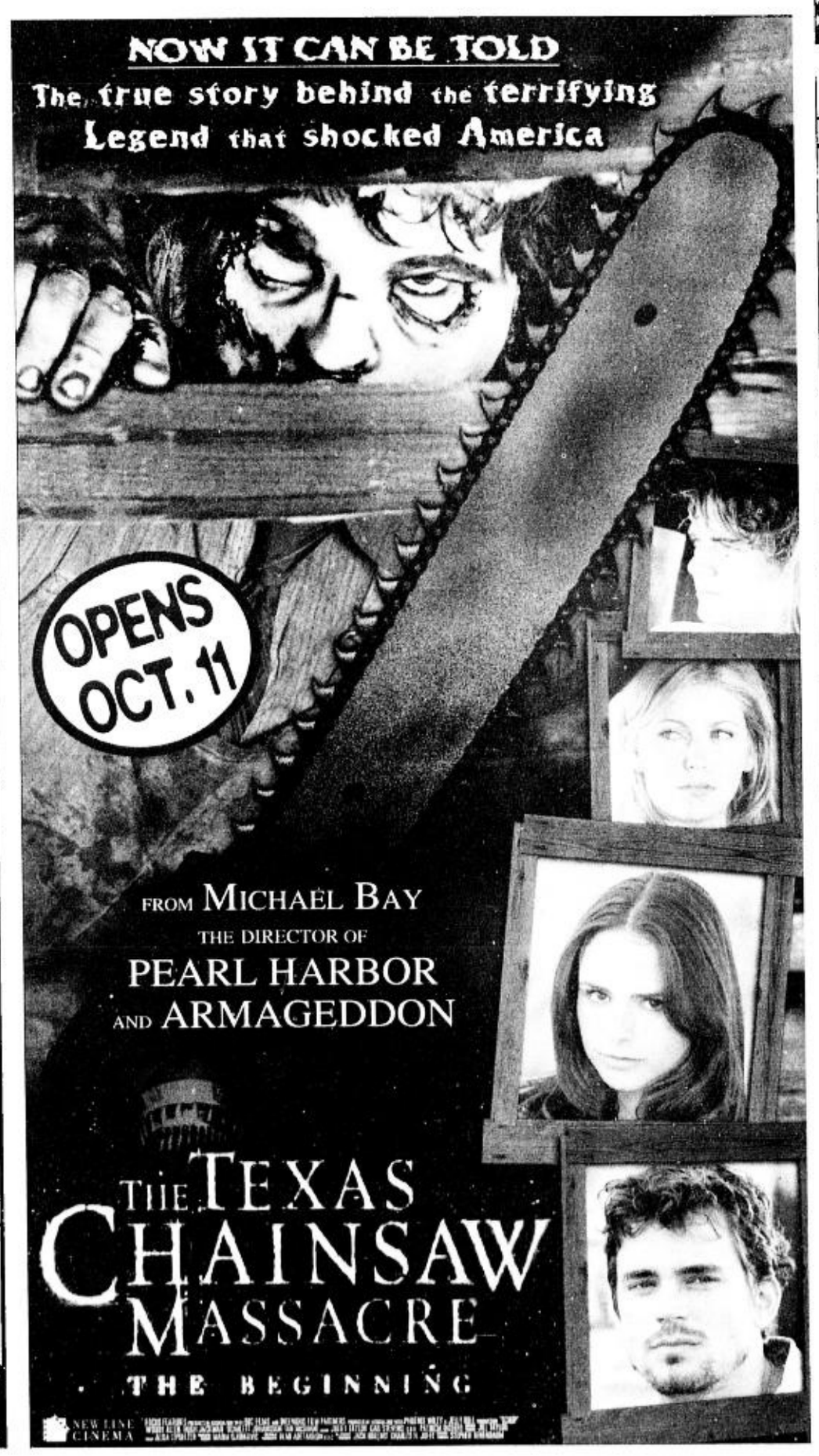


WEDDING ADVISORY: A MUST-SEE MOVIE FOR THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED SOON.

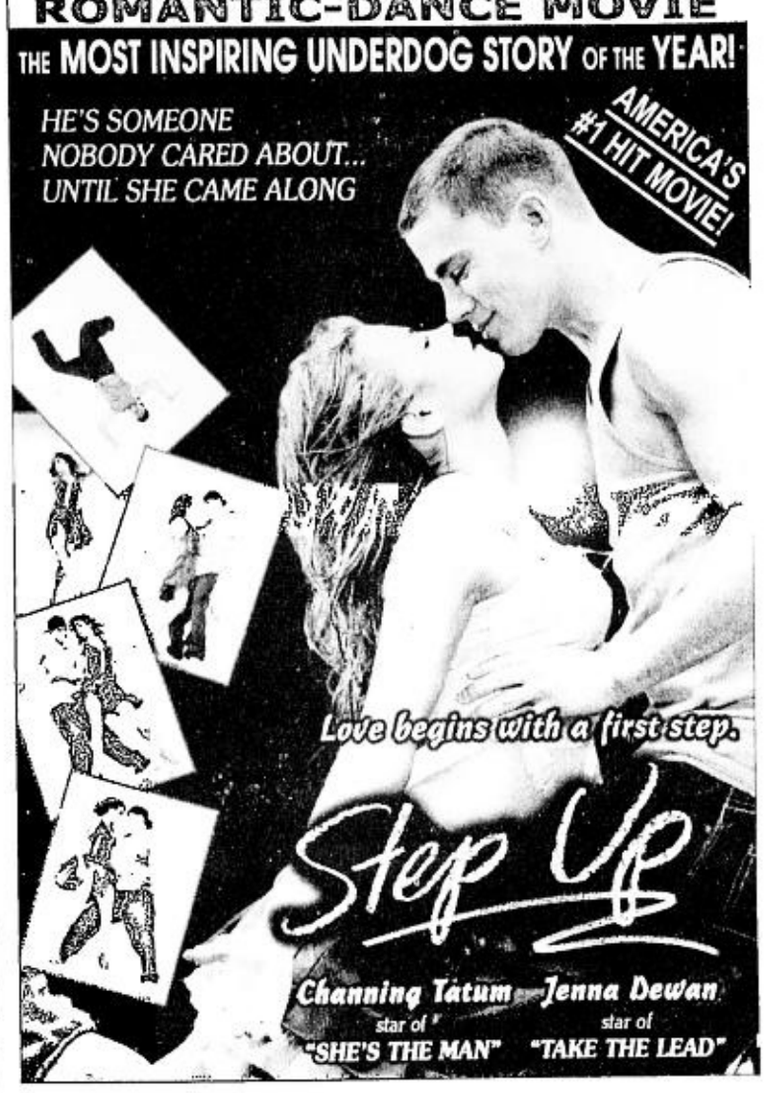


3RD WEEK

MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

MANILA'S MOST TALKED-ABOUT ROMANTIC-DANCE MOVIE

THE MOST INSPIRING UNDERDOG STORY OF THE YEAR!



2ND WEEK

MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

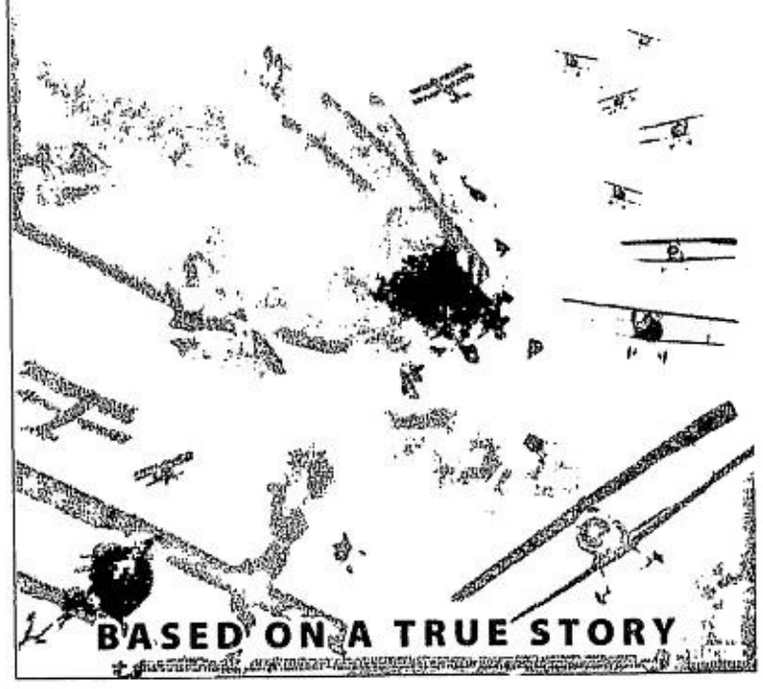
ALAMIN KUNG BAKIT PINAG-USAPAN NG BUONG MANILA.

HUWAG PALAMPASIN!

MARTIN HENDERSON | ABDUL SALIS | JEAN RENO | JAMES FRANCO | DAVID ELLISON | PHILIP WINCHESTER

FROM DEAN DEVLIN THE PRODUCER OF "GODZILLA" AND "INDEPENDENCE DAY"

FLYBOYS



FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES

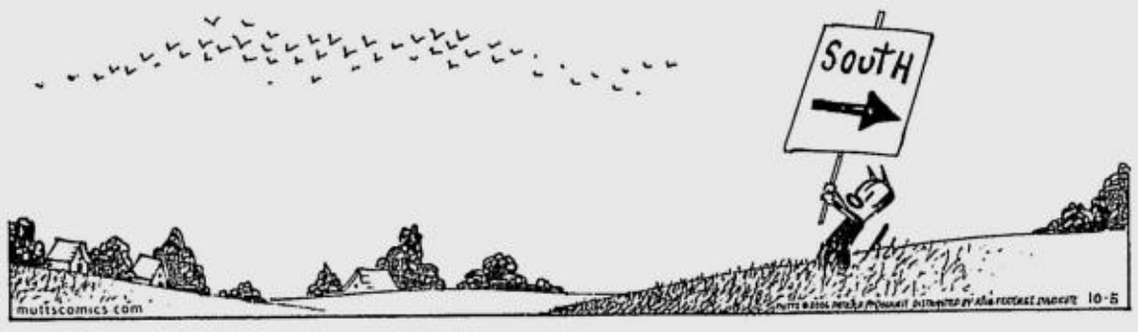
BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



LOVEKNOTS

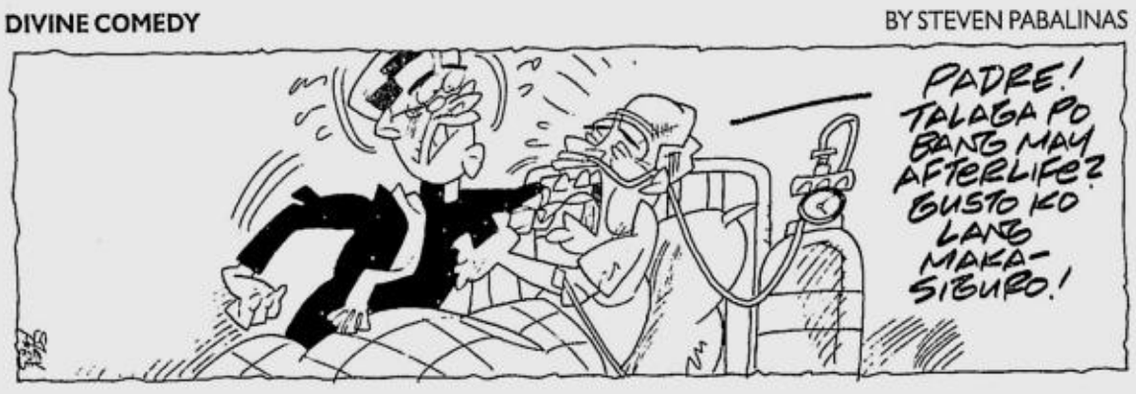
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

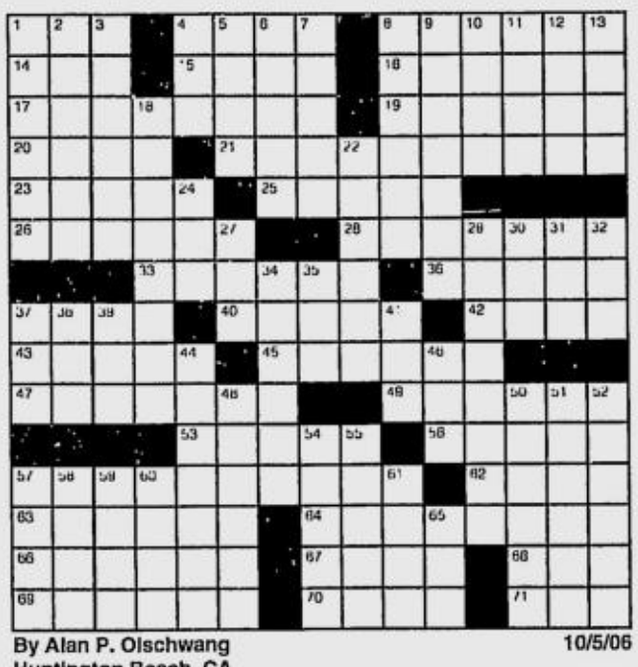
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Eve's origin?
4 So it would __ (apparently)
8 Rascals
14 112.5 degrees from S
15 Dog food brand
16 Baltimore ballplayer
17 Start of Phyllis Diller quote
19 Of a fast period
20 Charged lepton
21 Part 2 of quote
23 Obliterate
25 Go beddy-bye
26 Play an improper card
28 Portland, OR suburb
33 More wintry
36 Valerie Harper sitcom
37 Ballerina's skirt
40 Part 3 of quote
42 Sitting on
43 Gridlock
45 Gives the game away
47 Light amber brew
49 Tatter trader
53 __ Dame University
56 In that place
57 Part 4 of quote
62 Curving courses
63 Do an usher's job
64 End of quote
66 Become a pensioner
67 Fabled canal
68 Sniggler's prey
69 Exhausts
70 Out of __ (discordant)
71 Eminem's Dr.

DOWN
1 Hole enlarger
2 Cover, in a way
3 Lament
4 Mineo of movies
5 Zeno's home
6 Larger-than-life stories
7 City on the Tigris
8 Problem fixer
9 Vine
10 ...and that __ hay!
11 Night-flying insect
12 Entreaty
13 Transmitted
18 Doubtful
22 Rue
24 Freudian topic
27 Stately tree
29 Force to be a sailor
30 Sizzling
31 Pother
32 Atlas page
34 Hebrew letter
35 Add on with difficulty
37 Recipe abbr.
38 Spanish article
39 Russian chess master
41 Former Sov. unit
44 Cord for a whistle
46 Nugget of granola
48 Lehmann and Lenya
50 United
51 Actress Anne
52 Snuggle
54 Goes up
55 Way in
57 Flubs
58 Prez's underling
59 Italian noble family
60 Deer head?
61 Broad smile
65 NRC forerunner



By Alan P. Olschwang
Huntington Beach, CA
10/5/06

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

L	O	A	M	■	S	C	A	R	F	■	S	C	A	M
E	L	S	E	■	H	O	M	E	R	■	E	R	L	E
M	A	T	T	■	E	R	I	C	A	■	R	O	I	L
■	V	E	R	B	A	L	C	O	N	T	R	A	C	T
■	■	R	O	E	■	E	E	N	■	R	A	T	E	S
D	I	I	■	E	T	O	■	S	R	O	■	■	■	■
E	R	S	T	■	O	N	T	■	E	L	A	P	S	E
M	A	K	E	A	M	E	N	T	A	L	N	O	T	E
S	E	S	A	M	E	■	T	O	T	■	G	I	L	L
■	■	■	■	B	I	T	■	L	A	W	■	S	O	S
S	T	A	S	I	■	A	T	E	■	E	M	O	■	■
P	U	T	I	T	I	N	W	R	I	T	I	N	G	■
A	D	A	R	■	S	T	E	A	D	■	R	I	L	E
C	O	R	E	■	I	R	A	T	E	■	E	V	E	N
E	R	I	N	■	S	A	K	E	S	■	D	Y	N	E

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong sense of justice. You care about others. You'll also persuade people to join your cause if you can. People like you because you're fun-loving. Others want you on their team because you're a team player! You enjoy the beauty of pristine nature. Expect a major change to happen this year, perhaps as significant as in 1997-98.

Birthdate of: Karen Allen, actress; Kate Winslet, actress; Bob Geldof, musician/humanitarian.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Tension will build up today before tomorrow's Harvest Moon. Tension always builds up as the Full Moon approaches; then afterward, problems miraculously diminish! (No big deal.)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be extra-patient with coworkers, clients and customers. Tension might build up connected with your work. (This is because tomorrow is the Full Moon.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be forgiving of a friend. Irritations could arise today, since people are a bit tense and distracted because tomorrow is the Full Moon. (Guess how the word "lunatic" got started.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): If there's any tension between you and a parent or boss, give this person a wide berth today. Many people feel the buildup of tension before a Full Moon (which happens to be tomorrow). Gulp

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Avoid arguments about political or religious subjects. They will get you nowhere. People feel opinionated today because they feel the approach of tomorrow's Full Moon.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Money issues might come to a head now. Try to avoid arguments about money and possessions. In two days, you will be much less concerned about these matters. (Trust me.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You like harmony in your surroundings. You run from a fight (too upsetting). Be patient with others, because tomorrow's Full Moon makes everyone a bit anxious today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): The energy is building up today toward tomorrow's Full Moon. The best way for you to handle this is just to work. Distract yourself with whatever job you're doing.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Home, family and domestic matters are important to you now. Keep in mind that people get a bit impatient just before the Full Moon, which happens to be tomorrow.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't make an issue of anything today, especially if you're dealing with family matters, parents, bosses and authority figures. You have a choice: You can be part of the problem or part of the solution

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're a strong networker. If you want to persuade others to agree with your thinking about religious or political matters, you'd do best to tread lightly.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel a growing intensity within you. You want to understand how you can be responsible for something. Will there be enough money?

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

8	5							
7	2				8	9	6	
					3		1	
					9	1	2	
	8	5	1					
	3		5					
	1	7	2				5	4
							7	9

Difficulty Level ★★★ 10/05

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

7	9	3	4	8	5	6	1	2
4	8	1	6	2	9	5	7	3
6	5	2	3	1	7	8	9	4
1	3	5	9	4	6	2	8	7
8	2	7	5	3	1	9	4	6
9	4	6	2	7	8	3	5	1
3	7	8	1	9	2	4	6	5
2	6	9	7	5	4	1	3	8
5	1	4	8	6	3	7	2	9

Difficulty Level ★★★

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SNEAK PEEK

SARAH hits a high note.

RIVALS in matching retro fashion

Copycats, reloaded

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by August de la Cruz

RYAN AGONCILLO WATCHED the movie "Bituing Walang Ningning" on his DVD player at home, before taking over the role of record executive Nico Escobar, originally played by Christopher de Leon on the big screen.

Nerissa Cabral's *komiks* classic made him laugh and, by the time the closing credits rolled, weep buckets. "I never thought an old movie could make me cry," he recounted.

He described the movie's soap opera version, which is now on its final stretch on ABS-CBN, as " 'Bituing Walang Ningning, Reloaded' ... a lot of back story was added, like the family backgrounds of the two divas Lavinia and Dorina."

For a bit of trivia: Zsazsa Padilla was initially tapped to play Lavinia Arguelles opposite Sharon Cuneta's Dorina Pineda in the movie, but Cherie Gil eventually won the villainess character that uttered the campy line: "You're nothing but a second-rate, trying-hard copycat."

Another pop culture tidbit: It was co-star Tommy Abuel, according to Gil, who thought of the quotable quote.

ZSAZSA as Rosamia is reunited with Sarah as Dorina.

For the TV version, Padilla was recruited to play Rosamia Suarez, the mother of Dorina, now played by Sarah Geronimo. The Lavinia role went to Angelika de la Cruz.

With a tinge of regret, Padilla recalled an intense scene with Dominic Ochoa, who reprised Abuel's role of scheming record producer Larry Calma.

"I think I slapped him too hard. After the scene, his face was red and he had difficulty talking," Padilla recounted. "All that weight training at the gym must've made me stronger than usual."

Ai-Ai de las Alas, who was tapped to play Dorina's aunt Adora Pineda (originated by Lorli Villanueva), joked that the show's crying scenes made her lose pints of body fluids. "By the end of our tapings, I'd need dextrose!"

Apart from slap-happy and tear-jerking scenes, the soap also recreated the "water-dousing confrontation" between Lavinia and Dorina.

This time, red wine was used and it took two takes.

The soap's grand finale was a concert dubbed "Clash of the Divas," held at the Araneta Coliseum. The grand showdown is set to be aired tomorrow night.

"I wish I could be Dorina forever," Geronimo said.

Hmmm. It must be because Geronimo and De la Cruz took a lot of flak from some critics for daring to accept roles made iconic by Cuneta and Gil.

"We made sure that we wouldn't look like second-rate, trying-hard copycats," De la Cruz said at the show's launch.

But their Araneta fashion looked oh-so-retro and mothballed, as if they were hand-me-down rejects from Cuneta and Gil in the 1985 original.

RYAN Agocillo, Mico Palanca, Brenda Fox and Carlo Aquino watch "Clash of the Divas."

AI-AI as ailing Adora

ANGELIKA as Lavinia makes sparks fly.

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FLYBOYS 6.40 / 9.30
THE BREED 12:40 / 2 45 1 50
ZOOM :30 / 3:30 / 7:30
STEP UP 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
FIRST DAY HIGH 2.10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9 40
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE 5:30 / 9:30
DEAD OR ALIVE 1:25 / 3:30 / 5.35 / 7 40 / 9:45
THE DEPARTED 2:40 / 5.50 / 9:00

MALL 5

THE DEPARTED 1:40 / 4:50 / 8:00
PULSE 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:45
DEAD OR ALIVE 12.20 / 2:25 / 4.30 / 6.35 / 8.40
STEP UP 12 40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10
FIRST DAY HIGH 1:00 / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8 20

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A love quartet on ABS-CBN's new soap opera

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

ROMANTIC FOOLS SHOULD MARK Oct. 6 as a red-letter day for the one-and-a-half hour premiere episode of "Maging Sino Ka Man" on ABS-CBN. It casts **John Lloyd Cruz, Bea Alonzo, Anne Curtis** and **Sam Milby**. Award-winning actor **Christopher de Leon** plays the enigmatic Don Fidel.

As directors **Eric Reyes** and **Mae Cruz** say, "There are no *bidas* or *contrabidas* in this *teleserye*. Every character has his/her moment."

Bea admits that she was surprised with the scenes she had to do with John Lloyd. "I thought I couldn't do it. I was hesitant at first. Good thing my co-star is Lloydie because I can't imagine doing those intense scenes with another guy. Our love scenes on this soap are quite shocking and revealing!"

Is she also ready to reveal the real score between her and **Mico Palanca**? Will they shock the public and get married hastily like Mico's brother **Bernard** and **Meryll Soriano**?

Bea blushed. "Mico is not that consistent in courting me. I can't say if he's really courting me. But I find him nice and decent."

As for Lloydie, he'd rather keep quiet about his romance with magazine editor **Liz Uy**. He's no kiss-and-tell guy. He just shows and tells Liz.

I was yummily sandwiched between John Lloyd and Sam.

Lloydie teased Sam: "Playboy!" Sam shot back: "I can't even invite any girl to my new place because I'm hardly home." He's trying his darn best to be at home speaking Tagalog. "I read *komiks*. Too bad I don't have time to take formal lessons with a tutor."

For sure, legions of girls out there will volunteer to be his private Tagalog teacher *gratis et amore*.

Unlike other actors who have a twang, Sam doesn't turn off the *masa*. His candor endears him to the public all the more. "I'm not even aware of how famous they say I am. I don't get to see my billboards because I sleep when I'm in the car and I don't get to watch my shows because I'm out working most of the time."

Anne doesn't deny her closeness to Hale vocalist **Champ**. "He visits me sometimes and we hear Mass in Baclaran. I hope I can attend his album launch. Companionship *lang*. I don't believe in courtship. We just enjoy hanging out together. In any case, after Paolo (Araneta), I'm not yet ready to fall in love again."

Such is the colorful state of the love lives of the "Maging Sino Ka Man" stars.

F.Y.I (For Your Indulgence)

• Could it be true that **Kris Lawrence** is seeing an "Eat Bulaga" babe on the side and his girlfriend **Jasmine Trias** has no inkling at all? Could it be just a harmless flirtation or a blossoming friendship or is Kris really crisscrossing hearts? Hopefully Ms. Trias won't have to contend with being stuck in a love trio!

• I cornered **Denise Laurel** about her feelings on being pinpointed as "the other woman" in the Sam Milby-**Toni Gonzaga** romance. She sighs, "*Dyahe kay* Toni. I don't know if I should apologize because I'm not guilty *naman*. Some people just misinterpret my closeness to Sam." In fact, she claims she doesn't go for show biz guys. "I don't want to have Sam or any actor as boyfriend. It would be too intrigue-filled. I don't want to be controversial. I just want to be known as an actress." Memo to Denise: In Pinoy show biz, controversy is a prerequisite for stardom. You gotta be infamous first and foremost. A tinge of shame comes before full-blown fame!

• It felt great to touch base with **Bing Pimentel**, a schoolmate in high school. She's back in the biz as the ex-wife of Christopher de Leon in "Maging Sino Ka Man." I teased her. "What if your role were the love interest of your ex-hubby **Mark Gil**?"

She laughs: "Game *naman ako*. We're in good terms."

Is their son **Sid Lucero** like his dad? "They both act well but Sid is no playboy, unlike Mark when he was Sid's age."

Bing's no stage mother. She doesn't even look like a mother at all!

The "in" doctor

The doctor is in and she's the "IN" doctor to the stars: **Dr. Vicki Belo**. Thanks to my daily Belo rituals, nobody believes I've just turned 42. Dr. Vicki recently gave a talk at the 27th Annual Congress of the International Society of Dermatologic Surgery in Turkey. She's off to another speaking engagement for the American Society of Dermatologic Surgery in California. Hmm...Belo Me Mucho!

Man of mystery

On Nov. 3 and 4 at the Aliw Theater, X Zone Entertainment will take you to the mind-boggling world of "Misterio." It's a fantastic illusion show with a twisted sense of magic and mischief from the Philippines' top illusionist **Erik Mana**. For tickets, call 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

Rivermaya's back

The long drought between Rivermaya albums is finally over when "Isang Ugat, Isang Dugo" hits stores on Oct. 10. Their new album features 13 tracks.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

DiCaprio, Damon lead double lives

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME RECENT FILMS INVEIGLE WITH their unusual plot and thematic hooks.

Particularly intriguing is **Martin Scorsese's** latest action-thriller, "The Departed," in which lead actors **Leonardo DiCaprio** and **Matt Damon** play characters who both lead double lives.

"The Departed" tells a complex story of deception and betrayal. The local mob boss (**Jack Nicholson**) has planted an informer (Damon) in an elite police force that has been set up to break up his criminal operations.

The cops, in turn, have introduced their own double agent (DiCaprio) into the mob. Each man becomes completely committed to his double life, gathering insider information about the plans of the operation he has penetrated.

But, when the gangsters and cops realize that they have spies in their midst, the moles find themselves in constant danger—and each must race to uncover the other's identity in time to save himself.

Scorsese directing Nicholson, DiCaprio and Damon? "The Departed" is a should-see film in our book.

Also interesting, albeit in a comedic way, is the plot premise of "Deck the Halls," a Yuletide movie set in a small New England town that turns into a bitter battleground when two stubborn neighbors come to blows over the way their homes are decorated for the holidays!

DICAPRIO/ D2